Weekly Compilation of

Presidential Documents

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(Continued on the inside of the back cover.)

Editor's Note: The President was in St. Petersburg, FL, on October 22, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, October 22, 2004

Memorandum on Waiver and Certification of Statutory Provisions Regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization

October 14, 2004

Presidential Determination No. 2005–02

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Waiver and Certification of Statutory Provisions Regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization

Pursuant to the authority and conditions contained in section 534(d) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2004, Public Law 108–199, as provided for in the Joint Resolution Making Continuing Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2005, and for other Purposes (Public Law 108–309), I hereby determine and certify that it is important to the national security interests of the United States to waive the provisions of section 1003 of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987, Public Law 100–204.

This waiver shall be effective for a period of 6 months from the date hereof. You are hereby authorized and directed to transmit this determination to the Congress and to publish it in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 26, 2004]

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 15, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on October 27. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks in Oshkosh, Wisconsin

October 15, 2004

The President. Thank you all. Okay. It's great to be back in Oshkosh. My only regret is I don't have time to drive by Leon's. Laura and I are thrilled to be here. We're glad to be back in Wisconsin. The enthusiasm in this State is high. With your help, with your hard work, there is no doubt in my mind we will carry Wisconsin on November the 2d.

I want to—I am traveling with very good company today. So when I asked Laura to marry me, when I asked her to marry me, she said, "Okay, I will, just so long as I never have to give a speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay, you got a deal." Fortunately, she didn't hold me to the deal. She's giving a lot of speeches. The American people have come to know Laura as a compassionate, warm, great First Lady.

Audience members. Laura! Laura! Laura!

The President. I know my opponent * has been in the neighborhood recently.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He thought he was going over to Lambert Field. [*Laughter*] One of these days I'm going to make it to Lambeau Field and thank the Packers for being—setting such good examples for our kids.

I'm proud of Dick Cheney. Now, look, I admit it, he doesn't have the waviest hair in the race. [*Laughter*] I didn't pick him because of his hair. I picked him because of his judgment, his experience, his ability to get the job done for the American people.

I want to thank your Congressman, Tom Petri. He's a fine man. I appreciate you coming, Congressman. I see the chairman over there, Jim Sensenbrenner. Thanks for coming, Chairman. Finely, we're proud to be here with Mark Green, Congressman Mark Green. I appreciate you guys coming.

* White House correction.

You need to vote for Tim Michels for the United States Senate. He wisely married Barbara. [*Laughter*] I know somebody else who made the right choice. [*Laughter*]

I really appreciate the Experimental Aircraft Association for allowing us to use this hangar. You're famous in Oshkosh, by gosh. [*Laughter*] One reason why is your airplanes. Another reason why is because of the good people who live here. I'm honored you all came out to say hello. Thanks for being here.

I want to thank Jack Voight, the State treasurer. I appreciate the speaker being here. I want to thank all the local officials.

I want to thank my friend Rick Graber. I want to thank the grassroots politics—politicians, the people who are putting up the signs and making the phone calls, the volunteers. I know many of you are working hard, and I thank you for that. It's takes a lot of hard work to get this many people out. But there's more hard work to be done. Laura and I will be campaigning alongside of you. Work hard. We will win in November.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. We're working—we're coming from the West. We were in Oregon this morning. Then we stopped off in Iowa, and fortunately, get to come to Wisconsin today. And one of the reasons we're coming west to east is, you might remember, we had a debate or two recently. I enjoyed those debates. Those debates give us a chance to express our opinions, and they show the stark differences between my opponent and me. See, we have different records, and we have different plans for the future.

My record is one of reforming education, lowering taxes, providing prescription drugs for our seniors, improving homeland protections, and waging aggressive war against the ideologues of hate. The Senator's record is 20 years of out-of-the-mainstream politics, out-of-the-mainstream votes without many significant reforms or results to show for it. The records are important because our country faces many challenges, and the next President must recognize the need to reform and to be able to achieve reform. On issue after issue, from jobs to health care to the need to strengthen Social Security, my opponent has failed to recognize the changing realities of today's world and the need for fundamental reforms.

You know, in the final debate, I talked about the link between jobs and education. I believe when you're talking about jobs, you need to be talking about educating the people so they can fill the jobs of the 21st century. He said during that debate, I switched away from jobs and started talking about education. Well, yes, good jobs start with good education in America.

When it comes to health care, once again, the other night, he said with a straight face that his health care plan was not a Government plan. I could barely contain myself. Twenty-two million new people would enroll on a Government program under his plan. That would be the largest increase in Government health care ever.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

Audience member. Who pays for it?

The President. Yes. Eighty percent of the newly insured for his plan would be placed on a Government program like Medicaid. That's not the way to handle health care in America.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He said, well, his plan would help small businesses. Yet when you look at his plan, just like some of these analysts have done, they concluded that Senator Kerry's plan would be an overpriced albatross which would saddle small businesses with 225 new mandates.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I have a different view. Health care must be available and affordable and portable to help small businesses, and we don't need to saddle them with a bunch of Government rules.

Finally, talking about change, we need to do something about Social Security. And yet in the debate, my opponent said if later on, after a period of time, we find that Social Security is in trouble, well, then he'll call a meeting of experts. [*Laughter*] Social Security is fine for our seniors. You might remember the 2000 campaign here in Wisconsin, when they said, "If George W. gets elected, the seniors won't get their checks." Do you remember that?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Well, the seniors got their checks, and the seniors will continue to get their checks.

But we have trouble for our children and our grandchildren when it comes to Social Security. I think we need to think differently from the status quo. Youngsters ought to be able to take some of their own payroll taxes and set up a personal savings account, an account they call their own. It is the President's job to confront problems, not to pass them on to future generations and future Presidents.

The last few years, the American people have got to know me. They know my blunt way of speaking. I get that from my mother. [*Laughter*] They know I sometimes mangle the English language. [*Laughter*] I get that from my father. [*Laughter*] Americans also know I tell you exactly what I'm going to do, and I keep my word.

When I came into office, the stock market had been in serious decline for 6 months, and the economy was headed into a recession. To help families and to get this economy going again, I pledged to reduce taxes. I kept my word. The recession was one of the shallowest in American history.

Over the last 3 years, our economy has grown at the fastest rate of any major industrialized nation. The homeownership rate in America is at an alltime high. Incomes are up. Farm incomes are up. The past 13 months, we've added 1.9 million new jobs. The unemployment rate across America is 5.4 percent. That's lower than the average of the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s. The unemployment rate in the great State of Wisconsin is 4.8 percent.

This economy is moving forward, and we have more work to do. To keep this economy strong, I'll continue to stand behind our farmers, like our dairy farmers. I signed a good farm bill. It's a farm bill that promoted conservation on our farms and ranches. It's a farm bill that recognizes that by opening up markets, our farmers can make a good living. We want to be selling Wisconsin products all around the world. I'll continue to promote good agricultural policy. I'll work with Congress to renew the milk-income-loss contract, the milk program, which is vital to Wisconsin's dairy farmers.

We'll also make sure America is the best place in the world to do business. If you want jobs here in America, it's got to be the best place in the world to do business. That means less regulations on our job creators. We've got to do something about the junk lawsuits that are threatening the job creators in America.

To keep jobs here, we need an energy plan. The Congress needs to pass the plan I sent up there a couple of years ago. It is a plan that encourages conservation. It's a plan that encourages the use of renewables like ethanol and biodiesel. It encourages clean coal technology. It encourages increased domestic production in environmentally friendly ways. To keep jobs here in America, we must be less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

To keep jobs here, we've got to reject economic isolationism and open up markets. We've opened up our markets for products from overseas, and it's good for you as a consumer. If you've got more to choose from in the marketplace, you're likely to get that which you want at a better price and higher quality. That's how the market works. That's why I'm saying to places like China, "You treat us the way we treat you. You open up your markets." See, we can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere, so long as the rules are fair.

To create jobs here and to keep this economy growing, we've got to be wise about how we spend your money and we've got to keep your taxes low.

Now, my opponent has his own history on the economy.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. In 20 years as a Senator from Massachusetts, he has built the record of a Senator from Massachusetts. [*Laughter*] He has voted to raise taxes 98 times.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. That's in 20 years. That's nearly five times a year. I'd call that a pattern. [*Laughter*] See, he can run from his record, but he cannot hide. Now he's promising not to raise taxes for anyone who earns less than $200,000 a year. The problem is, to keep that promise he'd have to break all of his other ones. [*Laughter*] You see, he's proposed $2.2 trillion in new Federal spending. That's with

a "T." And yet he says he's going to raise it by taxing the rich. That only raises between 600 billion and 800 billion dollars. And so you can see there's a tax gap. [*Laughter*] Guess who usually fills the tax gap?

Audience members. We do!

The President. Yes. Let me say one other thing about this business about taxing the rich. The rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason: to stick you with the tab. We're not going to let him tax you; we're going to carry Wisconsin and win a great victory.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. When I came into office, our public schools had been waiting for decades for hopeful reform. Too many of our children were being shuffled through, grade after grade, year after year, without learning the basics. I pledged to restore accountability in our schools and end the soft bigotry of low expectations, and I kept my word. The No Child Left Behind Act is working. Our children are making sustained gains in reading and math. We're closing achievement gaps all around this country. We're making progress for our families. We will leave no child behind.

There is more work to do. We'll fund early intervention programs in our high schools to help at-risk students. We'll place a new focus on math and science. Over time, we'll require a rigorous exam before graduation. By raising performance in our high schools and by expanding Pell grants for low- and middle-income families, we will help more Americans start their careers with a college diploma.

My opponent has a history on education issues, a history of doing almost nothing. The Senator's pledged to weaken the No Child Left Behind Act.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He's proposed diluting the accountability standards and looking at measures like teacher attendance to judge whether students are learning.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. We must have high standards. We must have strong accountability measures. We must not undermine what we have passed. We have worked to move beyond the old days of mediocrity and excuses, and we're not going to go back.

When I came into office, we had a problem with Medicare. Medicine was changing. Medicare wasn't. Take, for example this: Medicare would pay hundreds—nearly $100,000 for a heart surgery but would not pay one dime for the prescription drugs that could prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. Think about that. It's not right for our seniors. It's certainly not right for our taxpayers. I pledged to bring Republicans and Democrats together to strengthen and modernize Medicare for our seniors, and I kept my word. Seniors are already getting discounts on their medicines. Rural doctors and rural hospitals are being treated more fairly. And beginning in 2006, all seniors will be able to get prescription drug coverage in Medicare.

We're moving forward on health care, and there's more to do. We need to make sure health care is affordable and available for all our people. We need a safety net for those with the greatest needs. I'm a big believer in community health centers, where the poor and the indigent can get good primary and preventative care. We'd much rather them getting care in a community health center than an emergency room of a local hospital. We'll do more to make sure poor children are fully subscribed in our programs for low-income families.

Most of the uninsured here in America work for small businesses. Small businesses are having trouble affording health care. In order to help our small businesses and help their workers and their families, small businesses ought to be able to pool together to be able to—so they can buy insurance at the same discounts big businesses are able to do. We'll expand health savings accounts so workers and small businesses are able to pay lower premiums and people can save tax-free in a health care account they call their own.

In order to make sure health care is available and affordable, we will do something about the junk lawsuits that are running up the cost to your health care. To make sure health care works, we've got to do something about the lawsuits that cause the Federal Government's tab to go up. You see, doctors

practice what's called defensive medicine because of all the lawsuits. It costs our Government about $28 billion a year. It costs our economy 60 to 100 billion dollars a year.

I don't think you can be pro-doctor, pro-patient, and pro-plaintiff-attorney at the same time. You have to choose. My opponent made his choice, and he put a personal injury lawyer on the ticket.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I made my choice. I'm standing with the doctors and the patients. I am for medical liability reform–now. In all we do to reform health care, this administration will make sure the decisions are made by doctors and patients, not by officials in Washington, DC.

You know, there's an old saying here: No one ever washes a rental car. [*Laughter*] A lot of wisdom in that statement. [*Laughter*] When you own something, you care about it. When you own something, you have a vital stake in the future of your country. That's why I will continue to promote an ownership society in America. We want our younger workers to be able to own a piece of the Social Security system so it will be available for them when they retire. We want more people owning their own business. Every time somebody starts a small business in America, they are achieving a piece of the American Dream. We will continue to expand ownership to every corner of our country. I've told you homeownership rates are at an alltime high. We want more people opening up the door where they live, saying, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property."

On issue after issue, from Medicare without choices to schools with less accountability to higher taxes, my opponent takes the side of more centralized Government. There's a word for that attitude. It's called liberalism.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Now, he dismisses that as a label. He must have seen it differently when he told a newspaper, "I'm a liberal, and I'm proud of it." [*Laughter*] The nonpartisan National Journal did a study that named him the most liberal Member of the United States Senate. And that's going a long way with that bunch. [*Laughter*]

I have a different record and a different view and a different philosophy. I don't believe in big Government, and I don't believe in indifferent Government. I'm what you would call a compassionate conservative. I believe in policies that empower people to improve their lives. I don't believe in policies that try to run people's lives. I trust the people. My opponent trusts the Government.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. We've done everything we can to help people, stand beside people, to help them have a future of dignity and independence. And that's how I'll continue to lead our Nation for 4 more years.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. In this time of change, there are some things that do not change, the values we try to live by, reverence and integrity, courage and compassion. In a time of change, we all must support the institutions that give our lives direction and purpose, our families, our schools, and our religious congregations. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every being counts. We stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. We stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

My opponent's words on these issues are a little muddy, but his record is plenty clear. He says he supports the institution of marriage, but he voted against the Defense of Marriage Act. He voted against the ban on partial-birth abortions.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. One time on his campaign, he called himself the candidate of conservative values, but he described the Reagan years as a period of moral darkness.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. There is a mainstream in American politics, and my opponent sits on the far left bank. He can run, but he cannot hide.

This election will also determine how America responds to the continuing danger of terrorism. The most solemn duty of the American President is to protect the American people. If America shows uncertainty or

weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

Since that terrible morning of September the 11th, 2001, we have fought the terrorists across the Earth, not for pride, not for power, but because the lives of our citizens are at stake. Our strategy is clear. We'll protect the homeland. We'll strengthen our intelligence. We'll transform our All-Volunteer Army and keep it an all-volunteer army. We're staying on the offensive. We will strike the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. We will continue to spread freedom and liberty. And we will prevail.

Our strategy is succeeding. Think about the world as it was some 3½ years ago. Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida. Pakistan was a transit point for terrorists. Saudi Arabia was fertile ground for terrorist fundraising. Libya was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons. Iraq was a dangerous place and a gathering threat. And Al Qaida was largely unchallenged as it planned attacks.

Because we acted, because the United States of America led, Afghanistan is free and is now an ally in the war on terror; Pakistan is capturing terrorist leaders; Saudi Arabia is making raids and arrests; Libya is dismantling its weapons programs; and an army of a free Iraq is fighting for freedom; and more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members and associates have been brought to justice.

We are conducting a broad strategy to keep America safe. By defending ourselves, 50 million people in Afghanistan and Iraq are now free. Think about that. I want our youngsters here to recognize they're watching incredible history unfold.

Take a look at Afghanistan. It wasn't all that long ago that many young girls were not allowed to go to school. That country was run by barbarians. They were backwards. They had an ideology based upon hatred. Their mothers would be pulled into the public square and whipped, some of them killed in a sports stadium because they wouldn't toe the line of their ideology. It was a dim and dark society. But because we acted in our self-interest, we freed the people of Afghanistan. And they had Presidential elections. Thousands of people came out to vote. The first voter in the Presidential elections in Afghanistan was a 19-year-old woman. Think about that. Freedom is on the march, and the world is better for it.

In Iraq, elections are scheduled for January. Think about how far that society has come from the days of torture chambers and mass graves. See, it's in our interests. It's in our security interests that we stand with the people of Afghanistan and Iraq. Free societies in the Middle East will be hopeful societies which no longer feed resentments and breed violence for export. Free governments in the Middle East will fight the terrorists instead of harboring them. And that will help us keep the peace.

So the mission is clear. We will help these countries train armies and police and security forces, so the people of Afghanistan and Iraq can do the hard work of defending their freedom and democracy. We will help them get on the path to stability and self-government as quickly as possible, and then our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

I am proud to be the Commander in Chief of a great military. And it is a great military because of the character and the decency of those who wear our Nation's uniform. I want to thank the veterans who are here tonight for having set such a good example for those who wear the uniform. I want to thank the military families who are here for having made such great sacrifices for our freedom.

We will continue to make sure that our military has all the resources they need to complete their missions. That is why I went to the United States Congress and asked for $87 billion of supplemental funding to support our troops in combat in both Iraq and Afghanistan. It was a really important request, and it received great bipartisan support. As a matter of fact, only 12 United States Senators voted against the funding request, 2 of whom are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And when you're out there gathering up the vote, remind people of this fact: Only 4 Members of the United States Senate—only 4 out of 100—voted to authorize the use of force and then voted against funding the troops sent into harm's

way, 2 of whom are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. So they asked him, how could he have made that vote? And perhaps the most famous quote of the 2004 campaign—[*laughter*]—he said, "I actually did vote for the $87 billion, before I voted against it."

Audience members. ——before I voted against it! [*Laughter*]

The President. Now, he's given a lot of answers since then. One of the most interesting ones is when he said, "Well, the whole thing was just a complicated matter." [*Laughter*] There's nothing complicated about supporting our troops in combat.

We have a difference of opinion when it comes to making this country secure. And in one of our debates, Senator Kerry proposed that this Nation should pass a "global test" before we send our troops.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. You know, the problem with his "global test" is that he could never pass it. [*Laughter*] In 1990, the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution supporting action to remove Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. The international community was united. Countries throughout the world joined our coalition. Yet even after United Nations approval, in the United States Senate, Senator Kerry voted against the authorization of the use of force.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Think about that, and think about what he said in one of the debates when he said it was a "mistake" to remove Saddam Hussein. He said he would have tried it differently. He would have had another United Nations Security Council resolution. That's exactly what Saddam Hussein would have wanted. The truth of the matter is, Saddam would still be in power in Baghdad if Senator Kerry had his way, and he would have been in Kuwait.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. And the world would be worse off. The world is better off with Saddam sitting in a prison cell.

Listen, I'll continue to build strong alliances during the next 4 years. Today, when I was flying in from out west, I had a good visit with Tony Blair, our strong ally. Alliances are important. Coalitions are important. But I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. I believe in the transformational power of liberty. I'll tell you what I mean by that. I'll use an example. Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan is my friend. He's Laura's friend as well. That probably doesn't seem unusual to some, but think about this. It wasn't all that long ago in the march of history that we were at war with Japan. They were the sworn enemy of the United States of America. They attacked us. My dad fought against the Japanese. I'm confident people's relatives out here went to World War II against the Japanese.

And after we won that war, President Harry S. Truman believed in the transformational power of liberty to convert an enemy into an ally. And so they worked to build a democracy in Japan. And there were a lot of skeptics in America then. You can imagine why. Japan was the enemy. How could an enemy possibly become a democracy? Why do we want to work with somebody who killed our sons—great skepticism.

But fortunately, he believed in the power of liberty to transform. And as a result of that belief, I sit down at the table today with Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan, talking about the peace we all want, talking about how we can work together to confront the problems of the world so our children can live in a more peaceful world.

We will succeed in Iraq, and someday, an American President will sit down with a duly elected leader of Iraq, and they'll be talking about the peace in the Middle East, and our children and our grandchildren will be better off for it.

I believe that millions plead in silence for their freedom in the Middle East. I believe women want to live in a free society. I believe the moms in the Middle East want their children to grow up in a free world. I believe that if given a chance, the people of the Middle East will embrace the most honorable form of government ever devised by man: democracy. I believe all these things because

freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This is not one of those times. This is a time that requires firm resolve, clear vision, and a deep faith that makes us a great nation.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I will never forget. There were workers in hardhats there yelling at me at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." I remember trying to console a fellow. He looked me in the eye, and he said, "Do not let me down." Ever since that day, I wake up every morning thinking about how to better protect our country. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

When I traveled your great State 4 years ago, I made a pledge that if I had a chance to serve, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office to which I had been elected. With your help, with your hard work, I will do so for 4 more years.

God bless. Thank you all for coming. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:58 p.m. at the Experimental Aircraft Association, Exhibit Hangar B. In his remarks, he referred to Tim Michels, senatorial candidate in Wisconsin, and his wife, Barbara; Wisconsin State Treasurer Jack C. Voight; John Gard, speaker, Wisconsin State Assembly; Richard W. Graber, chairman, Republican Party of Wisconsin; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Proclamation 7832—National Mammography Day, 2004

October 15, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Approximately one in seven women in the United States will develop breast cancer over her lifetime. Mammograms are critical for early detection of breast cancer and remain the most effective screening tool available today. Many women who develop breast cancer have no history of the disease in their families, and except for growing older, most have no strong risk factors. Regular mammogram screening, along with a clinical breast exam by a medical professional, can help identify breast cancer in its earliest stages when it is most treatable. On National Mammography Day, we underscore the importance of this life-saving technology.

The National Cancer Institute and the United States Preventive Services Task Force recommend a mammogram every 1 to 2 years for women age 40 and over. Strict guidelines help to ensure that mammograms are administered with the lowest possible doses of radiation by the best-trained medical staff. Scientists continue to study ways to improve mammograms and other screening technologies, and this research promises to make screening even more accurate and further reduce the number of breast cancer deaths.

My Administration is committed to preventing, detecting, treating, and ultimately finding a cure for breast cancer. Through an early detection program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, we have devoted over $200 million for promoting mammography use and helping low-income women afford screening for breast and cervical cancer. In addition, the National Institutes of Health is conducting the largest trial ever of new, early-detection technologies to help doctors target breast cancer before symptoms occur.

My Administration will continue working to ensure that America's women have access to the best screening services available. I urge women, especially those 40 and over,

to talk to their doctors about breast cancer screening and to encourage their friends and family to do the same. Together, we can help save lives and build a healthier future for all our citizens.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 15, 2004, as National Mammography Day. I call on all Americans to observe this day with appropriate programs and activities recognizing our health care professionals and researchers for their contributions in helping to detect and treat breast cancer.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 19, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 20. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Proclamation 7833—White Cane Safety Day, 2004

October 15, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

To help increase their mobility and assist them in their daily lives, many people who are blind or visually impaired use a white cane. On White Cane Safety Day, we celebrate the symbolism of this important tool and the enduring spirit of independence and determination shown by Americans who use it.

In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the first Presidential proclamation for White Cane Safety Day. He wrote that the observance would "make our people more fully aware of the meaning of the white cane" and help increase the safety and self-reliance of our citizens who are blind or visually impaired. Over the last four decades, our Nation has removed many barriers for these individuals, making it easier for them to find jobs, access public buildings, and live independently in their communities.

Today, we are working to ensure that all Americans with disabilities have the opportunity to live with dignity, work productively, and realize their full potential. Through the New Freedom Initiative, my Administration continues to build on the progress of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) to further promote the full participation of people with disabilities in all areas of society. The Department of Justice's ADA Business Connection is helping create a better understanding of ADA requirements and promote dialogue between the business community and the disability community. And the Department of Justice's Project Civic Access is improving public facilities to ensure that people with disabilities are integrated into community life. Through the Ticket to Work program and the Work Incentives Improvement Act, we are making significant strides toward building an America where all individuals are recognized for their talents and creativity. These efforts will help provide Americans who are blind or visually impaired the opportunity to pursue their dreams and realize the promise of our great country.

The Congress, by joint resolution (Public Law 88–628) approved on October 6, 1964, as amended, has designated October 15 of each year as "White Cane Safety Day."

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 15, 2004, as White Cane Safety Day. I call upon public officials, business leaders, educators, librarians, and all the people of the United States to join with me in ensuring that all the benefits and privileges of life in our Nation are available to individuals who are blind and visually impaired, and to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of

the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 19, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 16, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on October 20.

The President's Radio Address

October 16, 2004

Good morning. Over the past 4 years, I have brought a straightforward approach to the Presidency. I tell you what I'm going to do, and I keep my word. When I came into office 4 years ago, the economy was sliding into recession. Then terrorist attacks cost our Nation nearly a million jobs in 3 months. To help families and to get this economy growing again, I pledged to reduce taxes, and I kept my word. Now the results are clear. Over the last 3 years, America's economy has grown at the fastest rate of any major industrialized nation. The homeownership rate is at an alltime high, and we have added more than 1.9 million new jobs in the past 13 months.

My opponent has a different approach. Over the last 20 years, he has voted to raise taxes 98 times. Now he is promising over $2.2 trillion in new spending, and paying for it would require broad tax increases on small businesses and the middle class. I have a better plan. I will continue to be wise with taxpayers' money, and I will keep your taxes low.

When I came into office, too many of our children were shuffled through school without learning the basics. I pledged to restore accountability and end the soft bigotry of low expectations, and I kept my word. Now our children are making sustained progress in reading and math, and we are closing the achievement gap for minority students.

My opponent has pledged to weaken the No Child Left Behind Act. His proposals would undermine the accountability we worked so hard to pass. I have a better plan. We will keep demanding results for all our children, and we will leave no child behind.

When I came into office, Medicare wasn't paying for the prescription drugs that can reduce health costs and save a lot of lives. I pledged to strengthen and modernize Medicare for our seniors, and I kept my word. Now seniors are saving money with drug discount cards. And in 2006, all seniors will be able to get prescription drug coverage.

On health care, my opponent has a history of opposing needed reforms. He voted against the Medicare bill even though it was supported by the AARP and other seniors groups. He has voted 10 times against medical liability reform, and now his health care proposal calls for bigger, more intrusive Government. Eight out of ten people who get health care under his plan would be placed on a Government program. I have a better plan. I will protect doctors and patients from junk lawsuits, help employees in small businesses afford health coverage, make sure every poor county has a community health center. And I will make sure health decisions are always made by patients and doctors, not by officials in Washington, DC.

In this time of change, some things do not change. Those are the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. I stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every being counts. I stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. I stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

My opponent says he supports the institution of marriage, but he voted against the Defense of Marriage Act, which Congress passed by an overwhelming majority and my predecessor signed into law. My opponent has voted against sensible bipartisan measures like parental notification laws. He voted against the ban on partial-birth abortion.

On issues that are vital to this Nation's future, all Americans know where I stand. I'm a compassionate conservative. I believe in policies that empower people to improve their lives, not try to run their lives. I believe in helping men and women find the skills and tools to prosper in a changing world. I have worked to help all Americans build a future of dignity and independence. And that

is how I will continue to lead this Nation for 4 more years.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:45 a.m. on October 15 at the Jacksonville Inn in Jacksonville, OR, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 16. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 15 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks in Sunrise, Florida

October 16, 2004

The President. Thank you all. Nothing like spending a Saturday morning in Florida. Thank you. I'm proud you all are here. Thanks for coming.

I'm really proud of my brother Jeb. Your State has been tested recently—not one hurricane but four hurricanes. Jeb was a strong leader during these times. I had the honor of visiting Florida's families with him, those who hurt with him. I had an honor of traveling your State and seeing the great compassion of Florida arise as people hurt and suffered. You know, when times are tough is when you see where strong leaders emerge. Strong leadership emerged not only in your Governor, but strong leadership emerged all throughout your great State. We'll continue to help Florida rebuild. But one thing about this State you never have to worry about is the spirit of the people.

Listen, Laura and I are here to ask for the vote. We're traveling in Florida, and we're here to ask for your help. Make sure you get people to the polls. Starting Monday, people can vote. Listen, don't overlook discerning Democrats when you get them headed to the polls, people like Zell Miller. Remind people that if they want a safer America, a stronger America, and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

And one reason you need to put me back in office is so that Laura will have 4 more years as the First Lady. When I asked her to marry me, she said, "Fine, I'll marry you, just so long as I never have to give a political speech." [Laughter] I said, "Okay, you've got a deal." Fortunately, she didn't hold me to that deal. When people see her speak, they see a compassionate, strong, warm First Lady. I am really proud of her.

And I am really proud of my runningmate, Dick Cheney. Now, look, I admit he doesn't have the waviest hair in the race. [*Laughter*] I didn't pick him because of his hair. I picked him because of his judgment, his experience, and his ability to get the job done.

I appreciate so very much Wendell Hays joining me, Laura, and Jeb up here. Wendell, thank you for your service. Thank you for your courage, and thank you for your understanding the vision of peace that we're spreading.

I appreciate Congressman Clay Shaw joining us today. I want to thank Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen for joining us today. My friend Mel Martinez is not here, but you need to put him in the United States Senate. I want to thank Attorney General Charlie Crist joining us today. Mr. General, I appreciate you being here. Listen, the mayor of Fort Lauderdale is with us today—Mr. Mayor.

I thank all the grassroots activists. You never get thanked enough for putting up the signs or making the phone calls. I'm here to thank you for what you're going to do over the next 2 weeks. Turn out the vote. We'll win Florida again and win a great victory in November.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. In the last few years, the American people have gotten to know me. They know my blunt way of speaking. I get that from my mom. They know that I sometimes mangle the English language. [*Laughter*] I get that from my dad. [*Laughter*] Americans also know that I tell you exactly what I'm going to do, and I keep my word.

Those debates were interesting experiences. I enjoyed them. They highlighted the stark differences between my opponent and me. We have very different records and very different plans for the future. My record is one of reforming education, of lowering taxes, of providing prescription drug coverage for our seniors, for improving homeland security, and for waging an aggressive war against the ideologues of hate.

The Senator's record is 20 years of out-of-the-mainstream votes without many significant reforms or results.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. When I came into office, the stock market had been in serious decline for 6 months. And then the country was headed into a recession. To help families and to get this economy growing again, I pledged to reduce taxes. I kept my word.

Because we acted, the recession was one of the shallowest in American history. Over the last 3 years, our economy has grown at the fastest rate of any major industrialized nation. Today, the homeownership rate in America is at an alltime high. More minorities own a home than ever before in our Nation's history. Farm income is up. Our ranchers are doing well.

In the past 13 months, we've added more than 1.9 million new jobs. The unemployment rate in America is at 5.4 percent. That is lower than the average rate of the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s. The unemployment rate in your State is at 4.5 percent. This economy is moving forward, and we're not going to go back to the days of tax and spend.

To make sure quality jobs are created right here in America, we've got to make sure America is the best place in the world to do business. We need to reduce the burden of regulations on our job creators. We must end the junk lawsuits that are threatening our small businesses, which create most new jobs.

To create jobs here, Congress must pass my energy plan. The plan encourages conservation. It encourages the use of renewables like ethanol and biodiesel. It encourages new technologies. It encourages clean coal technology and increased domestic production in environmentally friendly ways. To keep jobs here, we must become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

To keep jobs here, we've got to reject economic isolationism and open up markets for U.S. products. We've opened up our market for products from overseas, and that's good for you as a consumer. If you've got more products to choose from, you're likely to get that which you want at a better price and higher quality. That's how the marketplace works. That's why I'm saying to China, "You treat us the way we treat you." See, we can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere, if the markets are open and the rules are fair.

To create jobs, we got to be wise about how we spend your money, and we've got to keep your taxes low. My opponent has his own history on the economy. [*Laughter*] In 20 years as Senator from Massachusetts, he's built a record of a Senator from Massachusetts. [*Laughter*] He's voted to raise taxes 98 times in the Senate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Now, he's been there 20 years. That means, on average, he's voted nearly five times a year to raise taxes. I'd call that a pattern. [*Laughter*] He can't run—he can run from his record, but he cannot hide.

Now the Senator is promising not to raise taxes for anyone who earns less than $200,000 a year. The problem is, to keep that promise he would have to break almost all of his other ones. [*Laughter*] See, he's proposed $2.2 trillion in new spending. That's with a "T." Yet, his plan to tax the rich only raises about 600 billion or 800 billion. See, there's a gap. There's a gap between the difference of what he's promising and what he can raise. And guess who usually gets to fill that gap?

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Let me say one other thing about taxing the rich. You've heard that language all the time, but the rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason: to slip the bill and pass it to you. We're not going to let him tax you; we're going to carry Florida and win a great victory.

When I came into office, our public schools had been waiting decades for hopeful reform. Too many of our children were shuffled through school, year after year, grade after grade, without learning the basics. I pledged to restore accountability to the schools and end the soft bigotry of low expectations. I kept my word. We're seeing results. Our children are making sustained gains in reading and math. We're closing an achievement gap all across this country. We're making progress for our families. We will leave no child behind in America.

To build a more hopeful America, we must have the best prepared, most highly skilled

workforce in the world. See, most new jobs are filled by people with at least 2 years of college education, yet only one in four of our students gets there. That's why we'll fund early intervention programs in our high schools to help at-risk students. We'll emphasize math and science. Over time, we'll require a rigorous exam before graduation. By raising performance in our high schools and expanding Pell grants for low- and middle-income families, more of our students will start their career with a college diploma.

My opponent has a history on education issues, a history of doing almost nothing. [*Laughter*] The Senator has pledged to weaken the No Child Left Behind Act.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. See, he's proposed diluting the accountability standards and looking at measures like teacher attendance to judge whether or not our students are learning. His proposals would undermine high standards and accountability. We've moved beyond the old days of failure and mediocrity and low standards, and we're not going back.

When I came into office, we had a problem in Medicare. See, medicine was modernizing and medicine was changing, but Medicare was not. Let me give you this example. Medicare would pay tens of thousands of dollars for heart surgery but wouldn't pay a dime for the prescription drugs that could prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. That was not fair to our seniors. It wasn't fair to the taxpayers. I pledged to bring Republicans and Democrats together to strengthen and modernize Medicare for our seniors, and I kept my word. The results are clear. Seniors are already getting discount on their medicines. Rural hospitals are being treated more fairly. And beginning in 2006, all seniors will be able to get prescription drug coverage under Medicare.

We're moving forward on health care, and there's more to do. We need to make sure health care is available and affordable to all our people. I believe in a safety net for those with the greatest needs. I believe in community health centers, places where the poor and the indigent can get primary and preventative care. I believe every poor county in America ought to have a community health center. We will do more to make sure poor children are fully subscribed in our programs for low-income families.

We will do more to make sure health care is affordable. Most of the uninsured work for small businesses. Small businesses are having trouble affording health care insurance. We ought to allow small businesses to pool together so they can buy insurance at the same discounts that big businesses can do. We must expand health savings accounts so workers and small businesses are able to pay lower premiums and people can save tax-free in a health care account they call their own.

To make sure health care is available and affordable, we must do something about the junk lawsuits that are running up the cost of health care. By forcing doctors to practice defensive medicine, medical lawsuits cost the Federal Government about $28 billion a year. That means it costs you $28 billion a year. It costs our economy anywhere from 60 to 100 billion dollars a year. They drive up insurance premiums, which drives good doctors out of business. I've met many ob-gyns and patients of ob-gyns who understand the harm that lawsuits are doing to our system. I've met women who have had to drive miles to go see an ob-gyn. See, you cannot be pro-patient and pro-doctor and pro-personal-injury-lawyer at the same time. You have to choose. My opponent made his choice, and he put a personal injury lawyer on the ticket.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I made my choice. I'm standing with the doctors, and I'm standing with the patients. We're for medical liability reform—now.

My opponent has a health care proposal of his own, and it's a plan for a bigger and more intrusive role for the Federal Government. The other day, he looked in the television camera and he said the Government has nothing to do with his health care plan. I could barely contain myself. [*Laughter*] Of course his plan has got something to do with the Federal Government. Eight out of ten people who get health care under Senator Kerry's plan would be placed on a Government program.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Eight million Americans would lose their private insurance at work,

and most would have to go on a Government plan.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He claimed his plan would help small businesses, yet groups who've studied his plan have called it an overpriced albatross that would saddle small businesses with 225 new mandates.

I have a different view. Instead of moving health care to the Federal Government, I believe health care decisions ought to be made by doctors and patients, not by officials in Washington, DC.

I've set out policies that move America toward a positive and optimistic future. I believe our country can be an ownership society. You know, there's a saying that says: No one ever washes a rental car. [*Laughter*] There's some wisdom in that statement. When you own something, you care about it. When you own something, you have a vital stake in the future of the United States of America.

Our policies encourage entrepreneurship because every time a small business is started, someone is achieving the American Dream. We are encouraging health savings accounts so people have the security of owning and managing their own health care account. We're continuing to spread ownership. I love the idea when more and more Americans from all walks of life open up the door where they live and say, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property."

In a new term, I'll take the next great step to build an ownership society by strengthening Social Security. Our Social Security system needs fixing. You might remember the 2000 campaign, all those ads that told our seniors, "If George W. gets elected, he's going to take away your check." I want the seniors to remember they got their checks. No one is going to take away our seniors' checks. The Social Security system is solvent for those who relied upon Social Security. And baby boomers like me are in pretty good shape when it comes to Social Security.

We need to worry about our children and our grandchildren. We need to be worried—and many are—about whether Social Security will be around when they need it. For the sake of our children, we must strengthen Social Security by allowing younger workers to save some of their payroll taxes in a personal account, an account they can call their own, an account the Government cannot take away.

When it comes to Social Security, you heard my opponent the other night. He wants to maintain the status quo.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He's against these Social Security reforms I talk about, and he's against just about every other reform that gives more authority and more control to the individual. On issue after issue, from Medicare without choices to schools with less accountability to higher taxes, he takes the side of more centralized control and more Government. There's a word for that attitude. It's called liberalism.

He dismisses that word as a label, but he must have seen it differently when he told a newspaper, "I am a liberal, and I am proud of it." The nonpartisan National Journal magazine did a study and named him the most liberal Member of the United States Senate. That takes hard work. [*Laughter*] That's an accomplishment, if you're more liberal than Ted Kennedy. [*Laughter*]

I have a different record and a different philosophy. I do not believe in big Government, and I do not believe that Government should be indifferent. That's called compassionate conservatism. I believe in policies that empower people to improve their lives. I reject policies that tell people how to run their lives. We're helping men and women find the skills and tools to prosper in a time of change. We're helping all Americans to have a future of dignity and independence. And that's how I will continue to lead our Nation for 4 more years.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. In a time of change, some things do not change, the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. In a time of change, we must support the institutions that give our lives direction and purpose, our families, our schools, our religious congregations. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every being counts. We stand for marriage and family, which are the

foundations of our society. We stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

My opponent's words on these issues are a little muddy, but his record is plenty clear. [*Laughter*] He says he supports the institution of marriage, but he voted against the Defense of Marriage Act, which my predecessor signed.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He voted against the ban on the brutal practice of partial-birth abortion.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. One time in this campaign, he claimed he was a candidate of conservative values, but he's described the Reagan years as a time of moral darkness.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. There is a mainstream in American politics, and my opponent sits on the far left bank. He can run, but he cannot hide.

This election will also determine how America responds to the continuing danger of terrorism. I believe the most solemn duty of the American President is to protect the American people. If America shows uncertainty or weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

Since that terrible morning of September the 11th, 2001, we have fought the terrorists across the Earth, not for pride, not for power, but because the lives of our citizens are at stake. Our strategy is clear. We're defending the homeland. We're transforming our military. We will keep the All-Volunteer Army an all-volunteer army. We're strengthening our intelligence capacities. We're staying on the offensive. We will strike the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. We will spread freedom and liberty. And we will prevail.

Our strategy is succeeding. Think about the world as it was 3½ years ago. Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida. Pakistan was a transit point for terrorist groups. Saudi Arabia was fertile ground for terrorist fundraising. Libya was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons. Iraq was a dangerous place and a gathering threat. Al Qaida was largely unchallenged as it planned attacks.

Because we led, Afghanistan is an ally in the war on terror; Afghanistan held elections; Pakistan is capturing terrorist leaders; Saudi Arabia is making raids and arrests; Libya is dismantling its weapons programs; the army of a free Iraq is fighting for freedom; and more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members and associates have been brought to justice.

In defending ourselves, in upholding doctrine, 50 million people in Afghanistan and Iraq are free. And that's important to our security. Free nations will be peaceful nations. Free nations will help us reject terror. Free nations will no longer feed resentments and breed violence for export. When America gives its word, America must keep its word. And that's why we're standing with the people of Afghanistan and Iraq.

I want the youngsters here to recognize what's happened in the world. It wasn't all that long ago in Afghanistan that people lived under the brutal dictatorship of the Taliban. The Taliban had this grim ideology of hate. People lived in darkness. Young girls weren't allowed to go to school. Their mothers were taken into the public square and whipped if they wouldn't toe the ideological line. Because we acted in our own self-interest, millions of Afghan citizens went to vote for a President. The first voter was a 19-year-old woman. Freedom is on the march. That society has gone from darkness to light because of freedom.

And the same thing is happening in Iraq. The terrorists are trying to stop the advance of freedom because they understand a free society in the midst of the Middle East will defeat their ideology of hate. But freedom is on the march. There will be elections in Iraq in January. Think how far that society has come from the days of mass graves and torture chambers.

Our mission is clear. We'll help these countries train armies so their people can do the hard work of defending democracy. We'll help them get on the path to stability and self-government as quickly as possible, and then our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

I'm proud to be the Commander in Chief of such a great United States military. And it's a great military because of the character of those who serve. I want to thank the veterans who are here today for having set such a great example for those who wear the uniform. I want to thank the military families who are here today.

And we will make sure that your loved ones have all the resources they need to win the war on terror. And that's why I went to the United States Congress in September of 2003 and requested $87 billion in funding for our troops in harm's way. It was important funding. It was necessary funding, so necessary that the bipartisan support was overwhelming. As a matter of fact, only 12 United States Senators voted against supporting our troops in harm's way, 2 of whom are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. When you're out there getting people to vote, remind people of this startling statistic: There were only four Members of the United States Senate who voted to authorize the use of force and then voted against funding our troops in combat—only four—two of whom are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. You might remember perhaps the most famous quote of the 2004 campaign. When asked why he made his vote, my opponent said, "I actually did vote for the 87 billion, right before I voted against it."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He's been giving a lot of explanations since that explanation. One of the most interesting of all is he said, "The whole thing was a complicated matter." There's nothing complicated about supporting our troops in combat.

Tomorrow is the one-year anniversary of Senator Kerry's vote against funding our troops. He's had many and conflicting positions on the issue, and it's a case study into why his contradictions call into question his credibility and his ability to lead our Nation. In September 2003, as the $87 billion funding package was being debated, Senator Kerry said, "It would be irresponsible to abandon our troops by voting against the measure." Just one month later, he did exactly that irresponsible thing, and he abandoned our troops in combat by voting against the funding.

Audience members. Boo-o-o! Flip-flop! Flip-flop! Flip-flop!

The President. What happened to change the Senator's mind so abruptly in one short month? His opponent in the Democrat primary, Howard Dean, was gaining ground as an antiwar candidate. Senator Kerry apparently decided supporting the troops, even while they were in harm's way, was not as important as shoring up his own political position.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. At a time of great threat to our country, at a time of great challenge in the world, the Commander in Chief must stand on principle, not the shifting sands of political convenience.

We have differences when it comes to defending our country. Take, for example, the proposed "global test" that the Senator proposed before we defend ourselves.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. The problem with his "global test" is that the Senator can never pass it. [*Laughter*] In 1990, the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution supporting action to remove Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. The international community was united. Countries throughout the world joined the coalition. Yet, even after United Nations approval, in the United States Senate, Senator Kerry voted against the authorization for the use of force.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. If that action didn't pass his "global test," nothing will pass his "global test."

In this campaign, in one of our debates, you might remember that he said removing Saddam Hussein was a "mistake." When he said how he would have done it differently, he said, "Well, all we needed to do was pass another United Nations Security Council resolution."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. If the Senator had his way, not only would Saddam Hussein be still sitting in a palace in Baghdad, he'd be occupying Kuwait. The world is better off with Saddam Hussein sitting in a prison cell.

We will continue to build strong alliances. We'll continue to work to strengthen our coalitions. But I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

I believe in the transformational power of liberty. I'll tell you what I mean by that. One of our friends—I say "our"—Laura and my friends—is Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan. That doesn't sound like much, except when you think about it wasn't all that long ago that we were at war with the Japanese. In the march of history, 60 years isn't much. My dad fought against the Japanese. Your dads fought against—and granddads fought against the Japanese. They were the sworn enemy of America.

After World War II, President Harry S. Truman believed in the power of liberty to transform an enemy into an ally. There was a lot of skeptics then; a lot of people doubted that. You can understand why. Why would you want to waste time on an enemy? Many lives had been upset as a result of that war, and people were bitter. Some people just said the Japanese couldn't possibly self-govern. But we worked to help them build a democracy.

And today, I sit down at the table with Prime Minister Koizumi, talking about how to keep the peace. Someday, an American President will be sitting down with a duly elected leader of Iraq, talking about the peace in the Middle East. And our children and our grandchildren will be better off for it.

See, I believe that millions in the Middle East plead in silence for their freedom. I believe women want to live in a free society. I believe that moms and dads want to raise their children in freedom and peace. I believe all these things, because freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

Extending freedom also means confronting the evil of anti-Semitism. Today I signed the Global Anti-Semitism Review Act of 2004. This law commits a government to keep a record of anti-Semitic acts throughout the world and also a record of responses to those acts. This Nation will keep watch. We will make sure that the ancient impulse of anti-Semitism never finds a home in the modern world.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. This is a time that requires firm resolve, clear vision, and a deep faith in the values that make us a great nation.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I will never forget. There were workers in hardhats there yelling at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." I remember trying to do my best to console those coming out of the rubble. A guy grabbed me by the arm, and he looked me square in the eye, and he said, "Do not let me down." Ever since that day, I wake up thinking about how to better protect our country. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Four years ago, when I traveled your great State, I made a pledge that if you gave me a chance to serve, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office to which I had been elected. With your help, I will do so for 4 more years.

Thanks for coming. God bless. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:33 a.m. at the Office Depot Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; Senator Zell Miller of Georgia, who made the keynote address at the Republican National Convention; Wendell B. Hays, 1st Lt., Florida Army National Guard; senatorial candidate Mel R. Martinez of Florida; Florida Attorney General Charlie Crist; Mayor Jim Naugle of Fort Lauderdale, FL; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Remarks in West Palm Beach, Florida

October 16, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming. Thank you all for being here. It lifts our spirits that so many came out to say hello on a Saturday afternoon. Laura and I are grateful that you're here, and we appreciate you being here.

We're here to ask for your vote and your help. As Jeb mentioned, we're coming close to voting time, and it's time to go to your friends and neighbors and remind them they have a duty in this country to vote. And when you get them headed to the polls, tell them, if they want a safer America, a stronger America, and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

I'm going to give you some reasons to put me back in office today, but perhaps the most important one of all is so that Laura is the First Lady for 4 more years. When I asked her to marry me, she said, "Fine, I'll marry you, just as long as I never have to give a political speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay, you got a deal." Fortunately, she didn't hold me to that promise. She's given a lot of speeches, and when she does, the American people see a warm, compassionate, great First Lady.

I'm proud of my runningmate. I admit, Dick Cheney doesn't have the waviest hair in the race——

Audience members. Laura! Laura! Laura!

The President. Dick Cheney is a great Vice President.

I'm proud of brother Jeb. You know, you can determine the character of a person when times are tough, and times are really tough for you all here in Florida—not one hurricane but four. Jeb stepped up, as did a lot of other people, including, I hope, the Federal Government to your satisfaction, to provide help for people who hurt. But you know what we saw in those storms was the great character of the people of Florida, neighbor loving neighbor, neighbor helping neighbor. There's no doubt in my mind that the people of this State showed the people of the world that there's great character amongst you. And I'm proud of you, and I want to thank you for doing everything you can to help rebuild this State.

What an honor it is to be sharing the stage with Jack Nicklaus. He gave me a chance—I asked for a few putting lessons. [*Laughter*] He said, "Your game is beyond repair." [*Laughter*] But I'm proud to have his support, proud for him—to be able to call him friend.

I also want to thank Congressman Mark Foley, who is with us today. I appreciate you being here, Congressman. Congressman Clay Shaw and Emilie Shaw are with us today. Thanks for coming. Tom Gallagher is with us today. I appreciate him being here. I want to thank all the other statehouse officials and local officials.

But most of all, I want to thank the grassroots activists who are here. I want to thank all the volunteers who are getting ready to walk the vote across not only Florida but all across our country today. See, what's happening is, we've got people all over the country heading out into neighborhoods to knock on doors and putting in a good word for the Bush-Cheney ticket. Some volunteers are watching on the Internet right now, and I hope they're stretching for their walk. [*Laughter*] I want to thank them for their hard work. With your help, with their help, we're going to win a great victory in Florida and win on November the 2d.

In the last few years, the American people have gotten to know me. They know my blunt way of speaking. I got that from Mother. [*Laughter*] They know I sometimes mangle the English language. I got that from Dad. [*Laughter*] Americans also know I tell you exactly what I'm going to do, and I keep my word.

You know, I enjoyed the debates against my opponent, and they showed stark differences between his views and mine. We have different records. We have very different plans for the future. My record is one of reforming education, of lowering taxes, of providing prescription drug coverage for our seniors, improving homeland protection, and waging an unrelenting fight against the ideologues of hate.

My opponent's record is 20 years of out-of-the-mainstream votes without many significant reforms and results to show for it.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. These records are important. They are important because our country faces challenges. And the next President must recognize the need to lead and reform. On issue after issue, from jobs to health care to the need to strengthen Social Security, Senator Kerry's policies fail to recognize the changing realities of today's world and the need for fundamental reforms.

See, when I came into office, the stock market had been in serious decline for 6 months. The American economy was sliding into a recession. To help families and to get this economy growing again, I pledged to reduce your taxes. I kept my word. The results are clear. The recession was one of the shallowest in American history.

Over the last 3 years, our economy has grown at the fastest rate as any in nearly 20 years. The homeownership rate in America is at an alltime high. Farm and ranch income is up. In the past 13 months, we have added 1.9 million new jobs. The national unemployment rate is 5.4 percent, lower than the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Your unemployment rate is 4.5 percent. This economy is moving forward, and we're not going to go back to the days of tax and spend.

To make sure quality jobs are created right here in America, we've got to make sure America is the best place in the world to do business. That means less regulations on our job creators. That means we've got to do something about these lawsuits that threaten small businesses that are creating most new jobs.

To create jobs in America, Congress needs to pass my energy plan. It's a plan that encourages conservation. It encourages the use of renewables like ethanol and biodiesel. It encourages clean coal technology. It encourages the exploration for natural gas in environmentally friendly ways. To make sure this economy stays strong and people can find work, we must become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

To create jobs, we need to reject economic isolationism and open up markets around the world for U.S. products. We open up our markets for goods from overseas, and that's good for you. If you've got more choices in the marketplace, you're likely to get that which you want at a better price and higher quality. So, rather than shutting our markets, I'm saying to countries like China, "Treat us the way we treat you." Americans compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere, so long as the rules are fair.

To create jobs, we've got to be wise about how we spend your money and keep your taxes low. My opponent has his own history on the economy. In 20 years as a Senator from Massachusetts, he's built up a record of a Senator from Massachusetts. [*Laughter*] He's voted to raise taxes 98 times.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Think about that. He's been in the United States Senate for 20 years. That's about five times a year. [*Laughter*] That's a pattern. [*Laughter*] That's an indication of what's going to come. See, he can run from his record, but he cannot hide.

He's now promising not to raise taxes on anybody who earns less than $200,000 a year. The problem is, to keep that promise he would have to break almost all of his other ones. [*Laughter*] He's promised $2.2 trillion in new spending. That's with a "T." And yet his plan to pay for it is to tax the rich. But you can't raise enough money to tax the rich to pay for 2.2 trillion. There's a tax gap between his promises and what he can raise. And guess who usually has to fill the tax gap.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Yes. Let me say something else about the rhetoric of taxing the rich. The rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason: to slide the tab and stick you with the bill. We're not going to let the Senator tax you; we're going to carry Florida again and win in November.

When I came into office, our public schools had been waiting for decades for hopeful reform. Too many of our children were shuffled through school, year after year, without learning the basics. I pledged to restore accountability to our schools and raise standards and end the soft bigotry of low expectations, and I kept my word.

To build a more hopeful America, we must have the best prepared and most highly skilled workforce in the world. Most new jobs are filled with people—by people with at least 2 years of college, yet one in four of our students gets there. So that's why we'll

fund early intervention programs in our high schools to help at-risk students. We'll place a new focus on math and science. Over time, we'll require a rigorous examination before graduation. By raising performance in our high schools and expanding Pell grants for low- and middle-income families, we will help more Americans start their career with a college diploma.

When I came into office, we had a problem in Medicare. Medicine was changing; Medicare was not. For example, Medicare would pay tens of thousands of dollars for a heart surgery but would not pay a dime for the prescription drugs that can prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. That was not fair to our seniors, and it was not fair to the taxpayers. I pledged to bring Republicans and Democrats together to strengthen and modernize Medicare for our seniors, and I kept my word. Seniors are getting discounts on medicine. Docs are being treated fairly. Rural hospitals are being reimbursed. And beginning in 2006, all seniors will be able to get prescription drug coverage under Medicare.

We have more work to do. We have more work to do to make sure health care is available and affordable. We need a safety net for those with the greatest needs. I believe in community health centers, places where the poor and the indigent can get primary and preventative care, places where people can get the help they need without burdening the emergency rooms of our hospitals. In a new term, we'll work to make sure every poor county in America has a community health center. We'll need to do more to make sure poor children are fully subscribed in our program for low-income families.

We've got to do more to make sure health care is affordable. Most of the uninsured work for small businesses. Small businesses are having trouble affording health care. To help our workers get the health care they need, we must allow small businesses to join together so they can purchase insurance at the same discounts big companies are able to do. We will expand health savings accounts so workers in small businesses are able to pay low premiums and can save tax-free for a health care account they manage and call their own.

To make sure health care is available and affordable, we must do something about the junk lawsuits that are running good doctors out of practice and running the premiums up. By forcing doctors to practice defensive medicine, medical lawsuits cost the Government about $28 billion a year. That means they cost you $28 billion a year. The lawsuits cost our Nation's economy anywhere from 60 billion to 100 billion dollars a year. They drive up insurance premiums, which drives good doctors out of practice. You cannot be pro-patient and pro-doctor and pro-plaintiff-attorney at the same time. You have to choose. My opponent made his choice, and he put a personal injury trial lawyer on the ticket.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I have made my choice. I'm standing with the doctors. I'm standing with the patients. I'm for medical liability reform—now.

My opponent says he has a health care plan.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. My opponent has a health care plan. It's a plan for bigger and more intrusive Government. The other day in the debate, he said, "The Government has nothing to do with it." He was talking about his health care plan. I could barely contain myself. [*Laughter*] Of course, the Government has things to do with it. The facts are, 8 out of 10 people who get health care under Senator Kerry's plan would be placed on a Government program.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Eight million Americans would lose their private health insurance, and most would go on Medicaid. That is a Government program. Senator Kerry claimed his plan would help small businesses. Those who've studied his plan call it an overpriced albatross which would saddle small businesses with 225 new mandates.

I have a different view of health care. I'm not for increasing the Federal role in health care. I want to make sure health decisions are made by doctors and patients, not by officials in Washington, DC.

I've set out policies that move America toward a positive and optimistic vision. We're headed toward an ownership society in America. There's a saying that no one ever washes a rental car. [*Laughter*] There's a lot of wisdom in that statement. [*Laughter*] When you own something, you care about it. When you own something, you have a vital stake in the future of your country.

That's why we're encouraging entrepreneurship. Every time a small business is started, someone is achieving the American Dream. We're encouraging health savings accounts so people have the security of owning and managing their own health care account. We're promoting homeownership. I love it when more and more people from all walks of life open up the door where they live and say, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property."

In a new term, we'll take the next step to build an ownership society by strengthening Social Security. Our Social Security system needs fixing. First, let me talk to those who are on Social Security today. You might remember the 2000 campaign when they said in these TV ads, "If George W. wins, you will not get your check." I won, and you got your checks. You will continue to get your checks. The problem in Social Security is not for those on Social Security today or baby boomers like me.

The problem is for our children and our grandchildren. People are understandably worried about whether our children and grandchildren will have Social Security around when they need it. For their sake, we must be bold and think about how to reform Social Security. For our children's sake, we must strengthen Social Security by allowing younger workers to save some of their payroll taxes in a personal savings account that they call their own and that the Government cannot take away.

My opponent wants to maintain the status quo when it comes to Social Security. He's against the Social Security reforms I just discussed, and he's just—against about every other reform that gives more authority and control to individuals. On issue after issue, from Medicare without choices to schools with less accountability to higher taxes, he takes the side of more Government control. There is a word for that attitude. It's called liberalism.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He dismisses that as a label, but he must have been thinking differently when he told a newspaper, "I am a liberal and proud of it." As a matter of fact, the nonpartisan National Journal magazine did a study and named him the most liberal Member of the United States Senate. That takes hard work. [*Laughter*]

I have a different record and a different philosophy. I do not believe in big Government, and I do not believe Government should be indifferent. That is called compassionate conservatism. I believe in policies that empower people to improve their lives, not try to run their lives. So we're helping men and women find the skills and tools they need to prosper in a time of change. We're helping all Americans to have a future of dignity and independence, and that is how I will continue to lead our Nation for 4 more years.

In a time of change, some things do not change, the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every being counts. We stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. We stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

My opponent's words on these issues are a little muddy, but the record is real clear. [*Laughter*] He says he supports the institution of marriage, but he voted against the Defense of Marriage Act, which my predecessor signed into law. He voted against the ban on the brutal practice of partial-birth abortion.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He described the Reagan years as a time of moral darkness.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. There is a mainstream in American politics, and my opponent sits on the far left bank. He can run, but he cannot hide.

This election will also determine how America responds to the continuing danger of terrorism. The most solemn duty of the

American President is to protect the American people. If America shows uncertainty or weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

Since that terrible morning of September the 11th, 2001, we have fought the terrorists across the Earth, not for pride, not for power, but because the lives of our citizens are at stake. Our strategy is clear. We're defending the homeland. We're transforming our military. The All-Volunteer Army will remain an all-volunteer army. We're strengthening our intelligence. We're staying on the offensive. We will strike the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. We will spread freedom and liberty. And we will prevail.

Our strategy is succeeding. Think about the world as it was some 3½ years ago. Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida. Pakistan was a transit point for terrorist groups. Saudi Arabia was fertile ground for terrorist fundraising. Libya was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons. Iraq was a dangerous place and a gathering threat. And Al Qaida was largely unchallenged as it planned attacks.

Because we acted, because the United States led, Afghanistan is free and an ally in the war on terror; Pakistan is capturing terrorist leaders; Saudi Arabia is making raids and arrests; Libya is dismantling its weapons programs; the army of a free Iraq is fighting for freedom; and more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members and associates have been brought to justice. Because we acted to defend ourselves, more than 50 million people are now free, and that makes us more secure.

Think about what happened in Afghanistan. I want the youngsters here to understand the significance of what took place in 3½ short years. It wasn't all that long ago that the people of that country lived under the barbaric regime of the ideologues of hate. They lived in a period of darkness. Young girls were not allowed to go to school. Their mothers were pulled in the public square and whipped if they didn't toe their ideological line of these people. Because we acted to secure ourselves and to remove Al Qaida's ability to train, the people of Afghanistan are free. They went to the polls. They went to the polls to vote for President in the millions. The first voter in Afghanistan was a 19-year-old woman. Freedom is on the march. The people of Afghanistan no longer live in darkness. They now live in light because of democracy.

And we're making progress in Iraq. The people of Iraq will have elections in January. Think how far that society has come from the days of torture chambers and mass graves and brutality. No, we will stand with the people of Afghanistan and Iraq, because when America gives its word, America will keep its word. And we will stand with those people because we understand free societies in the Middle East will be hopeful societies which no longer feed resentment and breed violence for export. Free governments in the Middle East will fight the terrorists instead of harboring them. Freedom will help us keep the peace we all want.

So our mission is clear. We'll help the countries train armies so that the people of Afghanistan and Iraq can do the hard work of defending their democracies. We'll help them get on the path of stability and self-government as quickly as possible, and then our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

It is a great honor to be the Commander in Chief of a great military. And we're a great military because of the character of the people who wear our Nation's uniform. I want to thank the veterans who are here today for having set such a great example for those who wear the uniform. I want to thank the military families who are here today for their sacrifices.

We will make sure that our troops have all the resources they need to complete their missions. That's why I went to the United States Congress and asked for $87 billion of supplemental funding in September of '03. It was a very important request. We were there to support our troops in harm's way, and I received great bipartisan support for my request. As a matter of fact, the support was so strong that only 12 Members of the United States Senate voted against funding for our troops in combat, 2 of whom are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. When you're out rounding up the vote, remind people of this startling statistic: Only four United States Senators voted to authorize the use of force and then voted against funding for our troops—only four—two of whom are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. So they asked him why—you might remember the most famous quote of the 2004 campaign, when he said, "I actually did vote for the $87 billion, right before I voted against it."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He's had several explanations since then of his vote. One of them was, "The whole thing was a complicated matter." There's nothing complicated about supporting our troops in harm's way.

Tomorrow is the one-year anniversary of Senator Kerry's vote against funding for our troops. My opponent's many and conflicting positions on this issue are a case study into why his contradictions call into question his credibility and his ability to lead our Nation. In September 2003, as the $87 billion funding package was being debated, Senator Kerry said on national TV, "It would be irresponsible to abandon our troops by voting against it." Just one month later, he did exactly that irresponsible thing, and he abandoned our troops in combat by voting against the funding. What happened to change the Senator's mind so abruptly in one short month? His opponent in the Democrat primary, Howard Dean, was gaining ground as an antiwar candidate. Senator Kerry apparently decided supporting our troops, even while they were in harm's way, was not as important as shoring up his political position.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. At a time of great threat to our country, at a time of great challenge to the world, the Commander in Chief must stand on principle, not on the shifting sands of political convenience.

There are big differences of opinion about how best to lead in this world. Senator Kerry proposed that we should pass a "global test" before we defend ourselves.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. The problem is with that "global test," the Senator can never pass it. Remember what happened in 1990. The United Nations Security Council passed a resolution supporting action to remove Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. The international community was united. Countries throughout the world joined our coalition. Yet, even after United Nations approval, in the United States Senate, Senator Kerry voted against the authorization for the use of force. If that coalition didn't pass his "global test," nothing will pass a "global test."

During the debate, you might remember he said that removing Saddam Hussein was a "mistake." He actually said he would have done it differently by supporting another United Nations Security Council resolution.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Precisely what Saddam Hussein wanted. He wanted the world to look the other way. If my opponent had his way, Saddam Hussein would not only be sitting in a palace in Baghdad, he'd be in Kuwait. The world is better off with Saddam in a prison cell.

Listen, I'll continue to work to build strong alliances to keep our coalition strong. I talked to Prime Minister Tony Blair yesterday on Air Force One as I was heading from Iowa to Wisconsin. Alliances are important. Friendships are important in this dangerous world. But I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

I believe in the transformational power of liberty. I'll tell you what I mean by that. One of Laura and my best friends or closest friends in the international scene is Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan. That doesn't sound like much until you think about the fact that we were at war with them 60 years ago. Japan was a sworn enemy of the United States of America. My dad fought against the—our dad fought against the Japanese. I'm sure your dads and granddads probably did as well. They were a mortal enemy.

Yet, after we won in World War II, Harry S. Truman, President of the United States, believed in the transformational power of liberty. He believed that liberty could change an enemy into an ally. There was a lot of skeptics about that in America then, and you can understand why. Why would you want to work with the enemy? People lost lives,

had their families turned upside down, were wondering why we even cared about a former enemy. But fortunately, enough citizens and the President believed in the power of liberty. And today, I sit down with Prime Minister Koizumi, as a result of Japan being a democracy, talking about the peace we all want.

Someday, an American President will be sitting down with a duly elected leader of Iraq. They'll be talking about the peace in the Middle East, and our children and our grandchildren will be better off for it.

I believe that millions in the Middle East plead in silence for their freedom. I believe that women in the Middle East want to live in a free society. I believe moms in the Middle East want to raise their child in a free world. I believe all these things, because freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

Extending freedom means confronting the evil of anti-Semitism. Today, I signed the Global Anti-Semitism Review Act of 2004. This law commits the Government to keep a record of anti-Semitic acts throughout the world and also a record of responses to those acts. This Nation will keep watch and make sure the ancient impulse of anti-Semitism never finds a home in the modern world.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. This is a time that requires firm resolve, clear vision, and the deep faith in the values that makes this a great nation.

None of us will ever forget that era when one—that week when one era ended and another began. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I will never forget. There were workers in hardhats there yelling at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." I remember trying to console people, and a guy grabbed me by the arm, and he said, "Do not let me down." Ever since that day, I wake up every morning thinking about how to better protect our country. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

Four years ago, when I traveled your great State, I made a pledge that if you gave me a chance to serve, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office to which I had been elected. With your help, I will do so for 4 more years.

Thanks for coming. God bless. On to victory. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:20 p.m. at the Sound Advice Amphitheater. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; professional golfer Jack Nicklaus; Emilie Shaw, wife of Representative Clay Shaw; Tom Gallagher, chief financial officer, Florida Department of Financial Services; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Remarks in Daytona Beach, Florida

October 16, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming. Thank you all for being here on a beautiful Florida Saturday afternoon. Laura and I are honored so many came out to say hello. We're here to ask for your vote and ask for your help. As Jeb said, it's nearly voting time, and we're counting on you to get your friends and neighbors to the polls. Everybody ought to vote in this country. In a democracy, we have a duty to vote. So round up everybody you can find, head them to the polls, and remind them, if they want a safer country, a stronger country, and a better country, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

And perhaps the reason why you should put me back in is so that Laura will be First Lady for 4 more years. I love her dearly, and she's a great First Lady.

I'm proud of my Vice President. I recognize he doesn't have the waviest hair in the race. [*Laughter*] I didn't pick him for his hair. I picked him because of his experience and sound judgment.

I'm proud of my brother Jeb. You've been through a lot of hardship in this State—not one hurricane, not two, but four. The people of this State rose to the occasion, as did your Governor. It's amazing what happens in hard times. The compassion of this country comes forth, and the compassion of the people of

Florida came forth, neighbor helping neighbor, people putting their arm around somebody who hurts. I hope the Federal Government did—recognized that we did as much as we can possibly do, and we'll continue to help the people of this State get its feet back on the ground.

I want to thank Monty for his service to the country and for his introducing Jeb up here today. The Lieutenant Governor is with us, and I appreciate Toni Jennings. I appreciate all the State and local folks who are here.

I want to thank my friend Bill France. He's got something to do with cars over here. [*Laughter*] I'm proud he's here. One of the most amazing events of my life, at least as the Presidency, was to go to the NASCAR race here at the Daytona 500.

Most of all, I want to thank the grassroots activists who are here, the people who are putting up all the signs, turning out crowds like this at this rally, the people who are making the phone calls. There is no doubt in my mind that with your help, we'll carry Florida again and win a great victory on November the 2d.

The last few years, the American people have come to know me. They know my blunt way of speaking. I get that from Mother. [*Laughter*] They know that sometimes I mangle the English language. I get that from Dad. [*Laughter*] Americans also know that I tell you exactly what I'm going to do, and I keep my word.

When I came into office, the stock market had been in serious decline for 6 months. And then we had a recession. To help families and to get this economy going again, I pledged to reduce taxes. I kept my word.

Because we acted, the recession was one of the shallowest in American history. Over the last 3 years, our economy has grown at the fastest rate of any major industrialized nation. The national unemployment rate is at 5.4 percent, lower than the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. The unemployment rate in your State is 4.5 percent. Farm income is up. Homeownership rate is at an all-time high. This economy is moving forward, and we're not going to go back to the days of big Government, tax and spend.

To make sure quality jobs are created here in America, America must be the best place in the world to do business. That means less regulations on our job creators. That means we've got to do something about these junk lawsuits that are hurting small-business owners.

Listen, to keep jobs here, Congress needs to pass my energy plan. It's a plan that encourages conservation and encourages the use of renewables like ethanol and biodiesel. It encourages clean coal technology. It encourages the exploration for natural gas in environmentally friendly ways. To keep jobs here, America must be less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

To create jobs here, we need to open up markets for U.S. products. Listen, we open up our markets for goods from overseas, and that's good for you. When you've got more products to choose from, you're likely to get that which you want at a better price and higher quality. That's how the market works. And so, therefore, I'm saying to other countries like China, "Treat us the way we treat you." See, we can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere, if the playing field is level.

To create jobs, we've got to be wise about how we spend your money and keep your taxes low.

My opponent has his own history on the economy.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. In 20 years as a Senator from Massachusetts, he's built a record of a Senator from Massachusetts. [*Laughter*] He has voted to raise taxes 98 times.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. That's in 20 years. That's about five times a year. I'd call that a pattern. I'd call that an indicator. He can run from his record, but he cannot hide.

He looked in the camera the other night, and he said he promised not to raise taxes on anybody earning—that earns less than $200,000 a year. He said it with a straight face. [*Laughter*] The problem is, to keep that promise he would have to break almost all of his other ones. See, he's promised $2.2 trillion of new spending. That's with a "T."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He said he's going to pay for it by taxing the rich, but you raise only about 600 billion if you raise the top two brackets. So there's a gap between what he's going to spend and what money he can collect. And so guess who usually pays—fills that gap.

Audience members. We do!

The President. There's something else wrong with taxing the rich. The rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason: to slip the bill and stick you with it. [*Laughter*] We're not going to let him tax you; we're going to carry Florida and win in November.

When I came into office, our public schools had been waiting decades for hopeful reform. Too many of our children were shuffled through school, year after year, without learning the basics. I pledged to restore accountability to our schools, to raise the standards, and to end the soft bigotry of low expectations. And I kept my word. Our children are making sustained gains in reading and math. We're closing an achievement gap, and we're not going to go back to the days of mediocrity and low expectations.

To build a more hopeful America, we must have the best prepared and most highly skilled workforce in the world. We live in a global economy. Most new jobs are filled by people with at least 2 years of college, yet only one in four of our students gets there. So we'll fund early intervention programs in our high schools to help at-risk students. We'll place a new focus on math and science. Over time, we'll require a rigorous exam before graduation. By raising performance in our high schools and by expanding Pell grants for low- and middle-income families, we will help more Americans start their career with a college diploma.

When I came to office, we had a problem in Medicare. Medicine was changing; Medicare was not. Let me give you an example. Medicare would pay hundreds of thousands of dollars—tens of thousands of dollars for heart surgery but not one single dime for the prescription drug coverage—for the prescription drugs that would prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. That wasn't fair to our seniors and didn't make any sense for the taxpayers. I pledged to bring Republicans and Democrats together to strengthen and modernize Medicare for our seniors. I kept my word.

We're moving forward on health care, and there's more to do. We need to make sure health care is available and affordable for all our people. We need a safety net for those with the greatest needs. I believe in community health centers, where low and poor can get their preventative care. See, I'd rather them get the care there at a place of compassion rather than your emergency rooms in your hospitals here. It doesn't make any sense to have pressures on your emergency rooms. We can do a better job for the poor and the indigent. I believe every poor county in America ought to have a community health center. We'll make sure our poor children are fully subscribed in our programs for low-income families so they can get the health care they need.

We also ought to make sure health care is affordable. Listen, most of the uninsured work for small businesses. Small businesses are having trouble affording health care. We ought to allow small businesses to join together in associations so they can purchase insurance at the same discounts that big companies get to do. We got to expand health savings accounts so workers in small businesses are able to pay low premiums and people can save tax-free for a health care account they manage, a health care account they can call their own.

To make sure health care is available and affordable, we must do something about the junk lawsuits that are running up the cost of health care. By forcing doctors to practice defensive medicine, medical lawsuits cost the Government $28 billion a year. That means those lawsuits cost you $28 billion a year. Lawsuits—medical lawsuits cost our economy anywhere from 60 to 100 billion dollars a year. They drive up the insurance premiums, which drive good doctors out of practice. I have talked to too many ob-gyns that are having trouble practicing. I've talked to too many expectant moms who are having to drive mile after mile because of these lawsuits. You cannot be pro-doctor, pro-patient, and pro-plaintiff-attorney at the same time. You have to make a choice. My opponent made his choice, and he put a personal injury trial lawyer on the ticket.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I made my choice. I'm standing with the docs and the patients. I'm for medical liability reform—now.

We have a difference when it comes to health care. My opponent has a plan that calls for bigger and more intrusive Government. In one of our debates, he actually said about his health care plan, the Government has nothing to do with it. I could barely contain myself. [*Laughter*] The facts are that 8 out of 10 people who get health care under Senator Kerry's plan would be placed on a Government program. Eight million Americans would lose their private health insurance at work, and most would have to go on a Government plan like Medicaid. He claimed his plan would help small businesses. But upon analysis, small-business groups concluded that his plan is an overpriced albatross that would saddle small businesses with 225 new mandates.

The choice in this election is clear. My opponent wants to move in the direction of Government-run health care. I believe health decisions ought to be made by doctors and patients, not by officials in Washington, DC.

We're moving toward an ownership society in America. There's an old saying that says no one ever washes a rental car—[*laughter*]—a lot of wisdom in that. [*Laughter*] When you own something, you care about it. When you own something, you have a vital stake in the future of our country. That's why we're promoting entrepreneurship, creating an environment where the small-business owner can flourish. Every time a small business is started someone is realizing the American Dream. We're encouraging health savings accounts, so people have the security of owning their own health care that they could take with them from job to job. We're promoting homeownership. I love the idea that more and more Americans from all walks of life are opening up the door where they live and saying, "Welcome to my house. Welcome to my piece of property."

In a new term, we'll take the next step to build an ownership society by strengthening Social Security. The Social Security system needs fixing. I came to Washington to solve problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. Now, those who are on Social Security don't need to worry. Remember in the 2000 campaign when I was running, they said, "If George W. gets elected, he's going to take away your checks." Well, our seniors got their checks. They will continue to get their checks. Baby boomers are in pretty good shape when it comes to Social Security.

But we need to worry about our children and our grandchildren. We need to worry about whether or not Social Security will be around when they need it. For their sake, we must strengthen Social Security by allowing younger workers to save some of their payroll taxes in a personal savings account that will earn a better rate or interest than the current trust, a personal savings account they can call their own, an account the Government can never take away.

When it comes to Social Security, as you heard the other night, my opponent wants to maintain the status quo. He's against the Social Security reforms I outlined. As a matter of fact, he's against just about every reform that gives more authority and more control to the individual. On issue after issue, from Medicare without choices to schools with less accountability to higher taxes, he takes the side of more Government.

There's a word for that attitude. It is called liberalism. He dismisses that as simply a label. He must have seen it differently when he said to a newspaper, "I'm a liberal and proud of it." [*Laughter*] The nonpartisan National Journal magazine did a study, named him the most liberal Member of the United States Senate. That's hard work. That's hard to do. [*Laughter*] It's hard to make Ted Kennedy the conservative Senator from Massachusetts. He can run, but he cannot hide.

I have a different point of view, a different philosophy. I do not believe in big Government, and I do not believe that Government should be indifferent. I'm a compassionate conservative. I believe in policies that empower people to improve their lives, not try to run their lives. We're helping men and women find the skills and tools to prosper in a time of change. We'll help all Americans have a future of dignity and independence. That is how I have led, and that is how I will continue to lead for 4 more years.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. In this time of change, some things do not change, the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. In times of change, we all must support the institutions that give our lives direction and purpose, our families, our schools, our religious congregations. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every being counts. We stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. We stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

Now, my opponent's words on these issues are a little muddy—[*laughter*]—but his record is plenty clear. He says he supports the institution of marriage, but he voted against the Defense of Marriage Act, which my predecessor signed into law.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He voted against the ban on the brutal practice of partial-birth abortion.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He called the Reagan years a time of moral darkness.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. There is a mainstream in American politics, and my opponent sits on the far left bank. He can run, but he cannot hide.

This election will also determine how America responds to the continuing danger of terrorism. The most solemn duty of the American President is to protect the American people. If America shows uncertainty or weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

Since that terrible morning of September the 11th, 2001, we have fought the terrorists across the Earth, not for pride, not for power, but because the lives of our citizens are at stake. Our strategy is clear. We're defending the homeland. We are reforming and strengthening our intelligence capabilities. We are transforming our military. Our All-Volunteer Army will remain an all-volunteer army.

My opponent seems to be willing to say almost anything he thinks will benefit him politically. After standing on the stage, after the debates, I made it very plain, we will not have an all-volunteer army. And yet, this week—we will have an all-volunteer army. Let me restate that. [*Laughter*] We will not have a draft. No matter what my opponent tries to tell people and scare them, we will have an all-volunteer army. The only person talking about a draft is my opponent. The only politicians who have supported a draft are Democrats. And the best way to avoid a draft is to vote for me.

As part of our strategy, we will stay on the offensive. We will strike the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. We will spread freedom and liberty. And we will prevail.

The strategy is succeeding. Think about the world as it was 3½ years ago. Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida. Pakistan was a transit point for terrorist groups. Saudi Arabia was a fertile ground for terrorist fundraising. Libya was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons. Iraq was a dangerous place and a gathering threat. And Al Qaida was largely unchallenged as it planned attacks.

Because we led, Afghanistan is free and is now an ally in the war on terror; Pakistan is capturing terrorist leaders; Saudi Arabia is making raids and arrests; Libya is dismantling its weapons programs; the army of a free Iraq is fighting for freedom; and more than three-quarters of Al Qaida and its associates have been brought to justice.

In defending ourselves, in fighting for our security, we have freed over 50 million people in Afghanistan and Iraq. Think about what has happened in Afghanistan. I want the youngsters to understand what has taken place in about 3½ years. It used to be, those people lived under—in Afghanistan lived under the brutal reign of the Taliban. They lived in darkness. These people were so backward and so barbaric that young girls couldn't go to school. Their mothers were whipped in the public square if they didn't toe the ideological line. Because we protected ourselves, we liberated the people of Afghanistan from the Taliban. And by millions, they showed up at the polls to vote. The first voter

in the Presidential election was a 19-year-old woman.

Iraq will be holding Presidential elections. Think how far that country has come in a short period of time from the days of mass graves and torture chambers to a country beginning—a democracy beginning to grow. And it's in our interests to promote freedom. It's in our interests these countries become free, because free societies in the Middle East will be hopeful societies which no longer feed resentment and breed violence for export. Free societies and free governments in the Middle East will fight the terrorists instead of harboring them. Freedom will help us keep the peace.

And so our mission is clear. We will help these countries train the armies and police so the people of Afghanistan and Iraq can do the hard work of defending democracy. We will help them get on the path of stability as quickly as possible, and then our troops will return home with the honor they have earned.

We have a great United States military, and I'm proud to be their Commander in Chief. I want to thank the veterans who are here for having set such a great example for those who wear the uniform. I want to thank the military families who are here for their sacrifices. And I assure you, we'll keep the commitments I have made to our troops. We will make sure they have all the resources they need to complete their missions. That's why I went to the Congress in September of 2003 and requested $87 billion of supplemental funding to support our troops in harm's way in both Afghanistan and Iraq. The support was strong for that request, so strong that only 12 Members of the United States Senate voted against the funding, 2 of whom are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. When you're out gathering the vote, remind your fellow citizens that only four Members of the Senate voted to authorize the use of force and voted against funding for our troops—only four—two of whom are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. You might remember my opponent's famous quote when asked about his vote. He said, "I actually did vote for the $87 billion before, I voted against it."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He's given a lot of explanations since then. One explanation was, "The whole thing was just a complicated matter." There's nothing complicated about supporting our troops in combat.

Tomorrow is the one-year anniversary of Senator Kerry's vote against funding for our troops. My opponent's many and conflicting positions on this issue are a case study into why his contradictions call into question his credibility and ability to lead our Nation. In September of 2003, as the $87 billion funding package was being debated in Congress, Senator Kerry said, "It would be irresponsible to abandon our troops by voting against it." Just one month later, he did exactly that irresponsible thing and voted not to fund our troops. And so, what happened to change the Senator's mind so abruptly in one month? His opponent in the Democrat primary, Howard Dean, was gaining ground as an antiwar candidate. Senator Kerry apparently decided supporting the troops, even while they were in harm's way, was not as important as shoring up his political position.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. At a time of great threat for our country, at a time of great challenge in the world, the Commander in Chief must stand on principle, not on the shifting sands of political convenience.

The differences are clear when it comes to defending the country. Senator Kerry proposed that we should pass a "global test" before we defend ourselves.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. The problem with that "global test" is that the Senator can never pass it. [*Laughter*] In 1990, the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution supporting action to remove Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. The international community was united. Countries throughout the world joined the coalition. Yet, even after the United Nations' approval, Senator Kerry voted against the authorization of the use of force. If the 1991 gulf war didn't pass his "global test," nothing will pass his "global test."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And that makes America more dangerous. It makes the world less secure. I'll work with our allies. I'll build coalitions. But I will never turn over our national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

I believe in the transformational power of liberty. You know, one of our friends is Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan. That probably doesn't sound too unusual, except think back some 60 years ago when we were at war with the Japanese. They were our mortal enemy. My dad fought against the Japanese. I'm confident many relatives out here fought against the Japanese. And it was a tough war, a brutal war.

After the war was over, Harry S. Truman, President of the United States, believed in the power of liberty to transform an enemy into an ally. So did other Americans. There was a lot of skepticism as we worked with Japan to build a democracy. You can understand that. "This enemy could never become a democracy," some said. "Why do we want to help somebody who hurt so many of our citizens? Why do we care about a country that attacked us?" However, because people had belief in the power of liberty to transform, today, I sit down with Prime Minister Koizumi as a friend, talking about keeping the peace we all want.

Someday, a duly elected leader from Iraq will be sitting down with the President of the United States talking about peace in the Middle East, and our children and our grandchildren will be better off for it.

Extending freedom also means confronting the evil of anti-Semitism. Today I signed the Global Anti-Semitism Review Act of 2004. This law commits the Government to keep a record of anti-Semitic acts throughout the world and also a record of responses to them. This Nation will keep watch and will make sure that the ancient impulse of anti-Semitism never finds a home in the modern world.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This is not one of those times. This is a time that requires firm resolve and clear vision and the deep faith in the values that makes this a great nation. And one of those deep faiths we believe and understand is that we know that freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I will never forget. There were workers there in hardhats yelling at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." A fellow grabbed me by the arm. He looked me right in the eye, and he said, "Do not let me down." Ever since that day, I wake up every morning thinking about how to better protect our country. I will never relent in defending our security, whatever it takes.

Four years ago, when I traveled your great State asking for the vote, I made a pledge that if you gave me a chance to serve, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office to which I had been elected. With your help, with your hard work, I will do so for 4 more years.

God bless. Thank you all for coming. I appreciate you. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:10 p.m. outside the office building at 525 Fentress Blvd. near the Daytona International Speedway. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush and Lt. Gov. Toni Jennings of Florida; Bill France, Jr., former president, NASCAR; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Memorandum on Provision of U.S. Drug Interdiction Assistance to the Government of Brazil

October 16, 2004

Presidential Determination No. 2005–03

Memorandum for the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense

Subject: Provision of U.S. Drug Interdiction Assistance to the Government of Brazil

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by section 1012 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1995, as

amended (22 U.S.C. 2291–4), I hereby certify, with respect to Brazil, that: (1) interdiction of aircraft reasonably suspected to be primarily engaged in illicit drug trafficking in that country's airspace is necessary because of the extraordinary threat posed by illicit drug trafficking to the national security of that country; and (2) that country has appropriate procedures in place to protect against innocent loss of life in the air and on the ground in connection with such interdiction, which shall at a minimum include effective means to identify and warn an aircraft before the use of force is directed against the aircraft.

The Secretary of State is authorized and directed to publish this determination in the *Federal Register* and to notify the Congress of this determination.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 26, 2004]

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 18, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on October 27.

Remarks to the 2004 United States Olympic and Paralympic Teams

October 18, 2004

Thank you all for coming. Please be seated. It's such an honor for Laura and me to welcome the mighty United States Olympic team to the White House. We're really proud of our athletes. We want to welcome the U.S. Olympians and the Paralympians here on the South Lawn. We welcome the coaches and the team leaders who are here today. We welcome the former Olympians and Paralympians who are with us today. We want to welcome Herman Frazier and Jeanne Picariello. We want to welcome the family members here. But most of all, we're thrilled the athletes are here.

To qualify for Team USA, you had to set high goals, devote long hours to training, and outperform talented athletes from all across our country. In Athens, you faced the toughest competition and the highest pressure in all of sports. And when the games were over, America had earned more than 100 medals, the most in the world. We heard our national anthem played 35 times to honor gold medalists. Our athletes created lasting memories for millions of Americans who followed the games.

We'll always remember Paul Hamm coming from behind to win the gold in the men's gymnastics, and Carly Patterson winning the women's gold the next night. We'll remember Rulon Gardner leaving his shoes in the ring after winning his last match as an Olympic wrestler. We'll remember our many incredible swimmers, swimmers like Michael Phelps and the 4x200 women's freestyle relay team that set a world record. We'll remember the Paralympians who earned a remarkable 88 medals for the United States of America. Including Royal Mitchell and Karissa Whitsell, each of who earned two gold medals. We'll remember all the American teams that came together to win gold in the Olympics and Paralympics—men's rowing and sailing, women's soccer, softball, basketball—[*laughter*]—beach volleyball, and the women's wheelchair basketball team. Your success has showed the power of discipline and persistence.

These games came at an historic time for the world. You and your fellow Olympians showed why we have such great hope in this world. Think about what happened at the opening ceremonies. Our teams marched alongside men and women from Afghanistan and Iraq, nations that just 4 years ago knew only tyranny and repression.

With millions watching, you showed the best values of America. You were humble in victory, gracious in defeat. You showed compassion for your competitors. You showed the great tolerance and diversity of our people. You're great athletes. Most importantly, you showed great character. You made us all proud, and I want to thank you for being such fine ambassadors of our Nation to the world.

You also understand your responsibility to be champions away from the field as well. Appreciate the good examples you set for millions of children who dream about becoming Olympians or Paralympians themselves.

In the years ahead, I hope you'll continue to give back to your communities. I hope you'll consider mentoring a child or coaching a child. With your generosity and decency, you'll make this country a more hopeful place.

Once again, welcome to the White House. Congratulations. May God continue to bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:07 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Herman Frazier, Chef de Mission, 2004 U.S. Olympic team; Jeanne Picariello, Chef de Mission, 2004 U.S. Paralympic team; Paul Hamm, gymnast, Carly Patterson, gymnast, Rulon Gardner, wrestler, and Michael Phelps, swimmer, U.S. Olympic team; and Royal Mitchell, runner, and Karissa Whitsell, cyclist, U.S. Paralympic team.

Remarks in Marlton, New Jersey

October 18, 2004

The President. Thank you all. Thanks for coming. Thanks for the warm welcome. It is great to be back in the State of New Jersey. Oh, I know it might surprise some to see a Republican Presidential candidate in New Jersey in late October. The reason why I'm here, with your help, we'll carry the State of New Jersey in November.

We are now 15 days away from a critical election. Many important domestic issues are at stake. I have a positive, hopeful agenda for job creation, broader health coverage, and better public education. Yet all the progress we hope to make depends on the security of our Nation. America is in the middle of a global war on terror, a struggle unlike any we have ever known before. We face an enemy that is determined to kill the innocent and make our country into a battlefield. In the war on terror, there is no place for confusion and no substitute for victory. For the sake of our future and our freedom, we will fight this war with every asset of our national power, and we will prevail.

Laura sends her best. So I asked her to marry me; she said, "Fine, just so long as I never have to give a political speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay, you got a deal." Fortunately, she didn't hold me to that deal. The American people—a lot of Americans have seen her give a speech, and when they do, they see a compassionate, strong, warm woman.

I'm proud to have been standing on the stage with Bernie Kerik. He knows something about security. He's lived security all his life, and I want to thank him for his dedication and his service to the people of this country.

I want to thank Congressman Jim Saxton for being here today. And thank you for bringing your daughter, Jennifer. I want to thank Congressman Scott Garrett for joining us today. Congressman, thank you. Congressman Frank LoBiondo—thanks for coming, Frank and Tina. I want to thank Congressman Chris Smith and Marie for joining us. The chairman of the Republican Party was born and raised in this county. He's doing a fabulous job. Welcome my friend Ed Gillespie. Thanks for coming, Ed.

I want to thank all the State senators and statehouse members who are here. I want to thank the grassroots activists. I want to thank you for what you're going to do during the next 15 days. Put up the signs. Call the phones. Get the people out to vote. We're going to win the State of New Jersey and win a great victory in November.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. During the decade of the 1990s, our times often seemed peaceful on the surface. Yet, beneath that surface were currents of danger. Terrorists were training and planning in distant camps. In 1993, terrorists made their first attack on the World Trade Center. In 1998, terrorists bombed American Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. And then came the attack on the U.S.S. *Cole* in 2000, which cost the lives of 17 American sailors. In this period, America's response to terrorism was generally piecemeal and symbolic. The terrorists concluded this was a sign of weakness, and their plans became more ambitious,* and their attacks became more deadly.

Most Americans still felt that terrorism was something distant and something that would not strike on a large scale in America. That

* White House correction.

is the time that my opponent wants to go back to——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. ——a time when danger was real and growing, but we didn't know it, a time when some thought terrorism was only a "nuisance."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. But that very attitude is what blinded America to the war being waged against us. And by not seeing the war, our Government had no comprehensive strategy to fight it. September the 11th, 2001, changed all that. We realized that the apparent security of the 1990s was an illusion.

The people of New Jersey were among the first to understand how the world changed. On September the 11th, from places like Hoboken and Jersey City, you could look across the Hudson River and see the Twin Towers burning. We will never forget that day, and we will never forget our duty to defend America.

Out of the horror of that day, we also saw good emerge. America has seen a new generation of heroes, police, firefighters, members of the military. Americans have felt a new sense of community in neighborhoods and across our country. We've been reminded that all of us are a part of a great American story that is larger than our individual lives, and we have been reminded of our solemn responsibility to defend freedom.

September the 11th also changed the way we should look at national security, but not everyone realizes it. The choice we face in this election, the first Presidential election since September the 11th, is how our Nation will defeat this threat. Will we stay on the offensive against those who want to attack us——

Audience members. Yes!

The President. ——or will we take action only after we are attacked?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. Will we make decisions in the light of September the 11th or continue to live in the mirage of safety that was actually a time of gathering threats? And in this time of choosing, I want all Americans to know you can count on me to fight our enemies and defend our freedom.

Winning the war on terror requires more than tough-sounding words repeated in the election season. America needs clear moral purpose and leaders who will not waver, especially in the tough times. And winning the war on terror requires a strategy for victory. Unlike my opponent, I understand the struggle America faces, and I have a strategy to win.

Our first duty in the war on terror is to protect the homeland. This morning at the White House, I signed a strong law that will make our Nation more secure. With the 2005 Homeland Security Appropriations Act, we are providing essential funding for Coast Guard patrols and port security, for the Federal air marshal program, and for technology that will defend aircraft against missiles. We're adding new resources to patrol our borders and to verify the identity of foreign visitors to America. We need to know who's coming in and out of our country.

The new law includes vital money for first-responders and for better security of chemical facilities and nuclear plants and water treatment plants and bridges and subways and tunnels. All these measures show the unwavering commitment of our Government. We will do everything in our power to protect the American people.

The law I signed today is part of a broad effort to defend America against new dangers. After September the 11th, we created the Department of Homeland Security to make sure our Government agencies are working together. We're transforming the FBI into an agency whose primary focus is stopping terrorism. Through Project BioShield, we are developing new vaccines and treatments against biological attacks. We've trained more than a half million first-responders across America.

To protect America, we passed the PATRIOT Act, giving law enforcement many of the same tools to fight terrorists that they already had to fight drug cartels and organized crime. Since September the 11th, law enforcement professionals have stopped terrorist activities in Columbus, Ohio; San Diego, California; Portland, Oregon; Seattle, Washington; Buffalo, New York; and other places, including New Jersey, where we apprehended an arms dealer who was allegedly

trying to sell shoulder-fired missiles to terrorists.

My opponent voted for the PATRIOT Act, but now he wants to weaken it. There are plenty of safeguards in this law, making sure that civil liberties are protected and searches are authorized by court order. By seeking to dilute the PATRIOT Act, my opponent is taking the eye off the ball. The danger to America is not the PATRIOT Act or the good people who use it; the danger to America is the terrorists. And we will not let up in this fight.

To protect America, our country needs the best possible intelligence. Chairman Tom Kean and other members of the September the 11th Commission made thoughtful and valuable recommendations on intelligence reform. We are already implementing the vast majority of those recommendations that can be enacted without a vote of Congress. We're expanding and strengthening the capabilities of the CIA. We've established the Terrorist Threat Integration Center so we can bring together all the available intelligence on terrorist threats to one place.

But other changes require new laws. Congress needs to create the position of the National Intelligence Director and take other measures to make our intelligence community more effective. These reforms are necessary to stay ahead of the threats. I urge Congress to act quickly so I can sign them into law.

My opponent has taken a different approach, and it shows in his record. Just one year after the first attack on the World Trade Center in 1993, Senator Kerry proposed a $6 billion cut in the Nation's intelligence budget.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. But the majority of his colleagues ignored his irresponsible proposal. In 1995, he tried to cut intelligence funding again, and this time he could not get a single Member of the United States Senate to support his bill. And that's an important difference between us. Senator Kerry has a record of trying to weaken American intelligence. I am working every day to strengthen American intelligence.

In a free and open society, it is impossible to protect against every threat. So second, we must pursue a comprehensive strategy against terror. The best way to prevent attacks is to stay on the offense against the enemy overseas. We are waging a global campaign from the mountains of Central Asia to the deserts of the Middle East and from the Horn of Africa to the Philippines.

These efforts are paying off. Since September the 11th, 2001, more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members and associates have been brought to justice. The rest of them know we're coming after them.

After September the 11th, we set a new direction for American policy and enforced a doctrine that is clear to all: "If you support or harbor terrorists, you're equally guilty of terrorist murder." We destroyed the terror camps that trained thousands of killers in Afghanistan. We removed the Taliban from power. We have persuaded Governments in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia to recognize the enemy and join the fight. We ended the regime of Saddam Hussein, which sponsored terror. Iraq's new Government under Prime Minister Allawi is hunting down terrorists in Iraq. We sent a message to Libya, which has now given up weapons of mass destruction programs and handed nuclear materials and equipment over to the United States. We have acted, through diplomacy and force, to shrink the area where the terrorists can operate freely, and that strategy has the terrorists on the run.

My opponent has a fundamental misunderstanding on the war on terror. A reporter recently asked Senator Kerry how September the 11th changed him. He replied, "It didn't change me much at all."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. His unchanged worldview is obvious from the policies he still advocates. He has said this war is primarily an intelligence and law enforcement operation. He has declared, we should not respond to threats until they are, quote, "imminent." He has complained that my administration, quote, "relies unwisely on the threat of military preemption against terrorist organizations." Let me repeat that. He says that preemptive action is "unwise," not only against regimes but even against terrorist organizations.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Senator Kerry's approach would permit a response only after America is hit.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. This kind of September the 10th attitude is no way to protect our country. The war on terror is a real war with deadly enemies, not simply a police operation. In an era of weapons of mass destruction, waiting for threats to arrive at our doorsteps is to invite disaster. Tyrants and terrorists will not give us polite notice before they attack our country. As long as I'm the Commander in Chief, I will confront dangers abroad so we do not have to face them here at home.

The case of one terrorist shows what is at stake. The terrorist leader we face in Iraq today, the one responsible for beheading American hostages, the one responsible for many of the car bombings and attacks against Iraqis, is a man named Zarqawi. Before September the 11th, Zarqawi ran a camp in Afghanistan that trained terrorists in the use of explosives and poisons—until coalition forces destroyed that camp. He fled to Saddam Hussein's Iraq, where he received medical care and set up operations with some two dozen terrorist associates. He operated in Baghdad and worked with associates in northern Iraq who ran camps to train terrorists and conducted chemical and biological experiments—until coalition forces arrived and ended those operations. With nowhere to operate openly, Zarqawi has gone underground and is making a stand in Iraq.

Here, the difference between my opponent and me is very clear. Senator Kerry believes that fighting Zarqawi and other terrorists in Iraq is a "diversion" from the war on terror. I believe that fighting and defeating these killers in Iraq is a central commitment in the war on terror.

If Zarqawi and his associates were not busy fighting American forces in Iraq, does Senator Kerry think they would be leading productive and peaceful lives? [*Laughter*] Clearly, these killers would be plotting and acting to murder innocent civilians in free nations, including our own. By facing these terrorists far away, our military is making the United States of America more secure.

Third, to win the war on terror, America must work with allies and lead the world with clarity. And that is exactly what we are doing. The flags of 64 nations fly at U.S. Central Command Headquarters in Tampa, Florida, representing coalition countries that are working openly with us in the war on terror. Dozens more are helping quietly in important ways. Today, all 26 NATO nations have personnel either in Iraq, Afghanistan, or both. America's allies are standing with us in the war on terror, and we are grateful.

My opponent promises that he would do better with our allies, yet he's decided that the way to build alliances is to insult our friends. As a candidate for President, Senator Kerry has managed to offend or alienate almost every one of America's fighting allies in the war on terror. He has called the countries serving alongside us in Iraq, quote, "a trumped-up . . . coalition of the bribed, the coerced, the bought, and the extorted."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He has dismissed the sacrifice of 14 nations that have lost forces in Iraq, calling those nations "window dressing." In our debate a few weeks ago, he declared, "When we went in, there were three countries: Great Britain, Australia, and the United States." He left out Poland, one of the first countries to see combat on the first days of hostilities in Iraq. He never shows respect for some of the 30 nations that are serving courageously in Iraq today.

Senator Kerry even has disregarded the contributions of Iraqis who are fighting for their freedom. When he speaks of coalition casualties in Iraq, he doesn't count the hundreds of Iraqis who have given their lives fighting the terrorists and the insurgents. When Iraq's Prime Minister came to Washington to address Congress last month, Senator Kerry did not show up. Instead, he called a press conference and questioned the Prime Minister's credibility. The Prime Minister of Iraq is a brave man who survived the assassins of Saddam. The Prime Minister of Iraq deserves the respect of the world, not the scorn of a politician.

As part of his foreign policy, Senator Kerry has talked about applying a "global test."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. As far as I can tell, it comes down to this: Before we act to defend ourselves, he thinks we need permission from foreign capitals.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Yet, even the gulf war coalition in 1991 did not pass Senator Kerry's "global test." Even with the United Nations approval, he voted against removing Saddam Hussein from Kuwait.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. If that vast, U.N.-supported operation did not pass his test, nothing ever could. Senator Kerry's "global test" is nothing more than an excuse to constrain the actions of our own country in a dangerous world.

I believe in strong alliances. I believe in respecting other countries and working with them and seeking their advice. But I will never submit our national security decisions to a veto of a foreign government.

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

The President. Fourth, we will win the war on terror and make America safer by advancing the cause of freedom and democracy. Free societies are hopeful societies which do not nurture bitterness or the ideologies of terror and murder. Free governments in the broader Middle East will fight the terrorists instead of harboring them. And this is why a free Iraq and a free Afghanistan are vital to peace in that region and vital to the security interests of our country.

After decades of tyranny in the broader Middle East, progress toward freedom will not come easily. Yet, that progress is coming faster than many would have said possible. Across a troubled region, we are seeing a movement toward elections, greater rights for women, and open discussion of peaceful reform. The election in Afghanistan less than 2 weeks ago was a landmark event in the history of liberty. That election was a tremendous defeat for the terrorists.

My opponent has complained that we are trying to, quote, "impose" democracy on people in that region. Is that what he sees in Afghanistan, unwilling people having democracy forced upon them? We removed the Taliban by force, but democracy is rising in that country because the Afghan people, like everywhere, want to live in freedom.

No one forced them to register by the millions or stand in long lines at polling places. On the day of that historic election, an Afghan widow brought all four of her daughters to vote alongside her. She said this, she said, "When you see women here lined up to vote, this is something profound . . . I never dreamed . . . this day would come." But that woman's dream finally arrived, as it will one day across the greater Middle East. [*Applause*] Thank you.

The dream of freedom is moving forward in Iraq. The terrorists know it, and they hate it, and they fight it. And we can expect more violence as Iraq moves toward free elections. Yet, every day in Iraq, our coalition is defeating the enemy's strategic objectives. The enemy seeks to disrupt the march toward democracy. But an Iraqi independent electoral commission is up and running, political parties are planning campaigns, voter registration will begin next month, and free and fair Iraqi elections will be held on schedule this coming January.

The enemy seeks to establish sanctuaries in Iraq from which to commit acts of terror. But Iraqi and coalition forces are on the offensive in Fallujah and North Babil and have restored Government control in Samarra, Tall 'Afar, and Najaf.

The enemy wants to make Iraqis afraid to join security forces. But every week, more and more Iraqis answer the call to arms. More than 100,000 soldiers, police, and border guards are already trained, equipped, and bravely serving their country. And well over 200,000 will be in place by the end of 2005.

The enemy seeks to break the will of the Iraqi people. But as Prime Minister Allawi told the Congress, Iraqis are hopeful, optimistic, and determined to prevail in their struggle for liberty.

After the enemy has failed in so many goals, what can these killers do now? They can fill up our TV screens with horrible images of suicide bombings and beheadings. These scenes are chaotic and horrific, but they're not a complete picture of what's happening in Iraq. A recent poll found that more than 75 percent of Iraqis want to vote, and they have confidence in the electoral

progress. And more than 75 percent are hopeful about the future of their country. The violent acts of a few will not divert Iraqis and our coalition from the mission we have accepted. Iraq will be free. Iraqis will be secure. And the terrorists will fail.

My opponent has a different outlook. While America does the hard work of fighting terror and spreading freedom, he has chosen the easy path of protest and defeatism. He refuses to acknowledge progress or praise the growing democratic spirit in Iraq. He has not made democracy a priority of his foreign policy. But what is his strategy, his vision, his answer? Is he content to watch and wait as anger and resentment grow for more decades in the Middle East, feeding more terrorism until radicals without conscience gain the weapons to kill without limit?

Giving up the fight might seem easier in the short run, but we learned on September the 11th that if violence and fanaticism are not opposed at their source, they will find us where we live. America is safer today because Afghanistan and Iraq are fighting terrorists instead of harboring them. And I believe future generations of Americans will be spared violence and fear as democracy and hope and governments that oppose terror multiply across the Middle East.

Victory in the war on terror requires victory in Iraq. If a terror regime were allowed to reemerge in Iraq, the terrorists would find a home, a source of funding, and vital support. They would correctly conclude that free nations do not have the will to defend themselves. When Iraq becomes a free society at the heart of the Middle East, an ally in the war on terror, and a model for hopeful reform in a region that needs hopeful reform, the terrorists will suffer a crushing defeat and every free nation will be more secure.

Unfortunately, Senator Kerry does not share our commitment to victory in Iraq. For 3 years, depending on the headlines, the poll numbers, and political calculation, he has taken almost every conceivable position on Iraq.

Audience members. Flip-flop! Flip-flop! Flip-flop!

The President. First, he said Saddam Hussein was a threat, and he voted for the war. Then he voted against funds for bullets and body armor for the troops he had voted to send into battle.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He declared himself an antiwar candidate. Months later, he said that knowing everything we know now, he would have still voted for the war. Then he said the war was a "mistake," an "error," or "diversion." Having gone back and forth so many times, the Senator from Massachusetts has now flip-flopped his way to a dangerous position. My opponent finally has settled on a strategy, a strategy of retreat.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He has talked about artificial timetables to pull our troops out of Iraq. He has sent the signal that America's overriding goal in Iraq would be to leave, even if the job is not done.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And that approach would lead to a major defeat in the war on terror. So long as I'm the Commander in Chief, America will never retreat in the face of the terrorists. [*Applause*] Thank you.

We will keep our word to the Iraqi people. We'll make sure Iraqi forces can defend their country, and then American troops will return home with the honor they have earned.

On each of the four commitments needed to prevail in the war on terror, there is a clear choice before the American people. My opponent wants to weaken the PATRIOT Act and has a history of trying to undermine our intelligence services. I will take every necessary measure to protect the homeland. The Senator wants to wage the war on terror on the defensive. I will take the fight to the enemy. The Senator insults our friends in the world and wants to please a few critics. I'm working with our friends for the sake of freedom and security. The Senator is skeptical and pessimistic about democracy in Iraq and critical of our efforts in the broader Middle East. I know that the advance of freedom is the path to security and peace.

In all these areas, my opponent's views would make America less secure and the world more dangerous. And none of these positions should come as a surprise. Over a 20-year career in the United States Senate, Senator Kerry has been consistently wrong

on the major national security issues facing our country. The Senator who voted against the $87 billion for our troops in Afghanistan and Iraq is the same Senator who has voted against vital weapons systems during his entire career. He tried to cancel the Patriot missile, which shot down Scud missiles in Operation Desert Storm. He opposed the B–1 bomber, which was critical to victory in the Afghan campaign. He opposed the B–2 stealth bomber, which delivered devastating air strikes on Taliban positions. He opposed the modernized F–14D, which we used against terrorists in Tora Bora. He opposed the Apache helicopter, which destroyed enemy tanks and anti-aircraft missile launchers in Iraq.

The Senator who is skeptical of democracy in Iraq also spoke with sympathy for a communist dictator in Nicaragua in the 1980s and criticized the democracy movement as "terrorism." His misguided policies would have impeded the spread of freedom in Central America. The Senator who claims the world is more dangerous since America started fighting the war on terror is the same Senator who said that Ronald Reagan's policies of peace through strength actually made America less safe——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. ——the same Senator who said the Reagan Presidency was 8 years of "moral darkness."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. In this campaign, Senator Kerry can run from his record, but he cannot hide. [*Applause*] Thank you.

The Senator's long record shows a clear pattern on national security. He has consistently opposed a stronger military. He has consistently looked for excuses to constrain American power. He has consistently shown poor judgment on the great issues of war and peace. When one Senator among a hundred holds a policy of weakness, it doesn't make a lot of difference. But the Presidency is an office of great responsibility and consequence.

I have a record in office as well, and all Americans have seen that record. September the 4th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I will never forget. Bernie might remember the workers in hardhats that were yelling at me and yelling at us, "Whatever it takes." A man grabbed me by the arm, just coming out of the rubble, and he said, "Do not let me down." I have a responsibility that goes on. I wake up every morning thinking about how to make our country more secure. I acted again and again to protect the American people. I will never relent in defending our country, whatever it takes.

In a new term——

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. In a new term as your President, we will finish the work we have started. We will stand up for terror—we will stand up for freedom. And on November the 2d, my fellow Americans, I ask that you stand with me.

God bless. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:21 p.m. at the Evesham Recreation Center. In his remarks, he referred to Bernard B. Kerik, former commissioner, New York City Police Department; Tina LoBiondo, wife of Representative Frank A. LoBiondo; Marie Smith, wife of Representative Christopher H. Smith; Ed Gillespie, chairman, Republican National Committee; Thomas H. Kean, Chairman, National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (9/11 Commission); former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of the Iraqi Interim Government; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; and former President Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks in Marlton

October 18, 2004

Listen, thank you all for coming. So you're wondering what a Republican Presidential candidate is doing in New Jersey 15 days until the election? I'll tell you, what I'm doing here is I'm sending a strong message that with your help, we can carry New Jersey on November the 2d.

I'm so honored you all came out to say hello. Thank you so very much for your friendship, for your support. Make sure your friends go to the polls. Make sure your neighbors go to the polls. And tell them if they

want a safer America, a stronger America, and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back into office.

God bless you all. I'm headed down to Florida. I'm working. We're going to win. God bless. Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:18 p.m. at the Evesham Recreation Center. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Signing the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004

October 18, 2004

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 4011, the "North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004." The Act is intended to help promote human rights and freedom in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Section 107 of the Act purports to direct negotiations with foreign governments and international organizations. The executive branch shall implement section 107 in a manner consistent with the Constitution's grant to the President of the authority to conduct the foreign affairs of the United States.

George W. Bush

The White House,
October 18, 2004.

NOTE: H.R. 4011, approved October 18, was assigned Public Law No. 108–333.

Statement on Signing the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2005

October 18, 2004

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 4567, the "Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2005." The Act provides funds to protect the United States against terrorism and to carry out other departmental functions.

The executive branch shall construe as calling solely for notification the provisions of the Act that purport to require congressional committee approval for the execution of a law. Any other construction would be inconsistent with the principles enunciated by the Supreme Court of the United States in *INS v. Chadha*. Such provisions include the purported approval requirements in the appropriations for expenses for the development of the United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology project; customs and border protection automated systems; immigration and customs enforcement automated systems; operations, maintenance, and procurement of marine vessels, aircraft, and other related equipment of the air and marine program; United States Secret Service protective travel; and in sections 504 relating to unobligated balances, 508 relating to training facilities, and 510 relating to prospectuses.

Under the heading "Customs and Border Protection," the Act purports to require the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection to relocate its tactical checkpoints in the Tucson, Arizona, sector at least an average of once every 14 days. Decisions on deployment and redeployment of law enforcement officers in the execution of the laws are a part of the executive power vested in the President by Article II of the Constitution. Accordingly, the executive branch shall construe the relocation provision as advisory rather than mandatory.

The executive branch shall construe the provision relating to the Coast Guard under the heading "Acquisition, Construction, and Improvements" that purports to require inclusion of an amount for a particular purpose in the President's proposed budget for fiscal year 2006, in a manner consistent with the President's exclusive authority under the Constitution to recommend for the consideration of the Congress such measures, including proposals for appropriations, as the President judges necessary and expedient.

To the extent that provisions of the Act, including section 514, call for submission of legislative recommendations to the Congress, the executive branch shall construe such provisions in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to supervise the unitary executive branch and to recommend for the consideration of the Congress such measures as the President shall judge necessary and expedient. Accordingly, the affected departments and agencies shall ensure that any reports or recommendations

submitted to the Congress are subjected to appropriate executive branch review.

Section 518 of the Act purports to direct the conduct of security and suitability investigations. To the extent that section 518 relates to access to classified national security information, the executive branch shall construe this provision in a manner consistent with the President's exclusive constitutional authority, as head of the unitary executive branch and as Commander in Chief, to classify and control access to national security information and to determine whether an individual is suitable to occupy a position in the executive branch with access to such information.

To the extent that section 522 of the Act purports to allow an agent of the legislative branch to prevent implementation of the law unless the legislative agent reports to the Congress that the executive branch has met certain conditions, the executive branch shall construe such section as advisory, in accordance with the constitutional principles enumerated in the *Chadha* decision.

As is consistent with the text of the Act, the executive branch shall construe section 528 as relating to the integrity and supervision of the United States Secret Service only within the Department of Homeland Security. The executive branch therefore shall construe section 528 neither to affect the functions and supervision of personnel of the Secret Service assigned or detailed to duty outside the Department of Homeland Security nor to limit participation by the Secret Service in cooperative command and other arrangements with other governmental entities for the conduct of particular operations.

George W. Bush

The White House,
October 18, 2004.

NOTE: H.R. 4567, approved October 18, was assigned Public Law No. 108–334.

Statement on Signing the District of Columbia Appropriations Act, 2005

October 18, 2004

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 4850, the "District of Columbia Appropriations Act, 2005." The bill appropriates funds for the Government of the District of Columbia and other activities chargeable against the revenues of the District.

The provision of the Act relating to the Federal payment to the office of the District's Chief Financial Officer makes funds available for the projects and in the amounts specified in the statement of managers accompanying the conference report on the Act. While the specifications of projects and amounts in the statement of managers cannot satisfy the constitutional requirements of bicameral approval and presentment to the President needed to give them the force of law, the executive branch shall treat the specifications in a manner reflecting the comity between the executive and legislative branches on such matters.

Section 309 of the Act purports to require the use of particular revenue estimates in the budget request for fiscal year 2006. The executive branch shall construe section 309 in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to recommend for congressional consideration such measures, including requests for appropriations, as he judges necessary and expedient.

Section 331(5) of the Act purports to require congressional committee approval prior to obligation or expenditure of appropriated funds. The executive branch shall construe this provision to require only prior notification to the congressional committees, as any other construction would be contrary to the constitutional principles set forth by the Supreme Court of the United States in 1983 in *INS v. Chadha*.

George W. Bush

The White House,
October 18, 2004.

NOTE: H.R. 4850, approved October 18, was assigned Public Law No. 108–335.

Proclamation 7834—National Character Counts Week, 2004

October 18, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Individuals have the power to do much good, and great societies are built by knowing the difference between right and wrong. People of character strengthen our country through their daily actions. To help children fulfill their potential and build a more hopeful future for our Nation, we must continue to encourage and support the character development of our young people and support the institutions that give direction and purpose: our families, our schools, and our faith-based and community organizations.

Americans of all ages continue to inspire others with their compassion and decency by giving their time to faith-based and community organizations and bringing hope to others at home and around the world. The Senior Corps has more than 500,000 caring souls serving in its programs; the Peace Corps has grown to its highest number of volunteers in 28 years; and AmeriCorps will grow by 50 percent to 75,000 members this year. Almost two million students volunteer each year through the Learn and Serve America programs, which incorporate community service as a vital part of education. In addition, more than 1,300 communities have formed Citizen Corps Councils; over 10,000 communities have registered Neighborhood Watch programs; more than 27,000 Americans are serving in the Medical Reserve Corps; over 52,000 citizens have completed Community Emergency Response Team training; and there are more than 68,000 volunteers in the Volunteers in Police Service program. The true strength of America lies in the hearts and souls of its citizens, and these volunteers are making our country better and stronger.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 17 through October 23, 2004, as National Character Counts Week. I call upon public officials, educators, librarians, parents, students, and all Americans to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:31 a.m., October 20, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 21.

Remarks in St. Petersburg, Florida

October 19, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming. Nothing like spending a Tuesday morning at the ballpark. I can't thank you enough for coming. It lifts our spirits to see so many people here.

It's close to voting time, and I'm here to ask for your vote. We're going to travel your State today, and we'll be back quite often, asking the people of Florida for their vote. I'm also here to ask for your help. See, you can vote now in Florida. So get your friends and neighbors to do their duty. We have a duty in this country to vote. And remind them when you get them headed to the polls, if they want a safer America, a stronger America, and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

As I travel your State giving people a reason why they ought to put me back in office, perhaps the most important one of all is so that Laura is the First Lady for 4 more years. I'm really proud of her. I love her a lot. She is a warm, compassionate, great First Lady for this country.

And I'm proud of my runningmate, Dick Cheney. He does not have the waviest hair in this race. [*Laughter*] I didn't pick him because of his hairdo. [*Laughter*] I picked him because of his experience, his judgment, his ability to get the job done for the American people.

And I'm proud of my brother Jeb. In this time of need, he has risen to the occasion. I have seen him comfort those who have been hurt because of these hurricanes. I've seen him put his arms around those who worry about their future. We're doing everything we can to help this State get back on its feet. The Governor of your State is providing strong and necessary leadership to help.

And I know there are some here who are worried about the flu season. I want to assure them that our Government is doing everything possible to help older Americans and children get their shots, despite the major manufacturing defect that caused this problem. We have millions of vaccine doses on hand for the most vulnerable Americans, and millions more will be shipped in the coming weeks. We're stockpiling more than 4 million doses of flu vaccine for children. We're working closely with State and local officials to make sure we distribute vaccines to the most vulnerable Americans throughout our country.

I am grateful to the healthy Americans who are deciding a flu shot—who are declining a flu shot this year so that the most vulnerable of our citizens will get the vaccine. Here in Florida and across the Nation, we will continue to do everything possible to help our citizens.

I want to thank Lance Corporal Taylor Pancake for introducing Jeb and being on the stage. I want to thank him for his service to our country.

By the way, our brother Marvin is with us today. I appreciate you coming, big Marv. There he is, right there. See, we love our family. We've got a great family. There's nothing like being on the campaign trail with a brother you love. I've been looking forward to this day. Not only do I have one brother I love, I've got two brothers I love traveling the great State of Florida.

I'm proud to be able to work with Congressman Bill Young, the great Congressman from Florida. Your attorney general, Charlie Crist, is with us today. Thanks for coming, General. Our Government is working with Charlie to make sure anybody who tries to gouge the seniors of this State when it comes to the flu vaccines is going to be held to account.

I'm honored that the mayor took time to come by and say hello. Mr. Mayor, Rick Baker, is with us today. Thank you for coming, Mayor, proud you're here. I want to thank all the State and local officials. I'm proud to be on the stage with the next United States Senator from Florida, Mel Martinez. I know him well. He's the right man for the right State at the right time for the United States Senate. Kitty is here too, Kitty Martinez. She's going to make a great First Senator's wife. Thanks for coming, Kitty, great to see you.

I want to thank my friend Lee Greenwood, who's here. I want to thank all the grassroots activists for what you're going to do today and for the next 2 weeks to turn out the vote. There is no doubt in my mind, with your help, we'll carry Florida again and win a great victory in November.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. In the last few years, the American people have gotten to know me. They know my blunt way of speaking. I get that from Mother. They know I sometimes mangle the English language. [*Laughter*] I get that from Dad. [*Laughter*] They also know I tell you exactly what I'm going to do, and I keep my word.

You know, our debates highlighted the stark differences between Senator Kerry's views and mine. We have different records. We have different plans for the future. My record is one of reforming education, of lowering taxes, of providing prescription drug coverage for our seniors, for improving homeland protections, and for waging an aggressive war against the ideologues of hate.

My opponent's record is 20 years of out-of-the-mainstream votes.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Instead of articulating a vision or positive agenda for the future, the Senator is relying on a litany of complaints and old-style scare tactics.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. As proven by his record and a series of contradictions in this campaign, my opponent will say anything he thinks that will benefit him politically at the

time. I will do what I've said I will do. We will keep the promise of Social Security for all our seniors. We will not have a draft. We'll keep the All-Volunteer Army. With your help on November 2d, the people of America will reject the politics of fear and vote for an agenda of hope and opportunity and security for all Americans.

When I came into office, the stock market had been in serious decline for 6 months, and the American economy was sliding into a recession. To help families and to get this economy growing again, I pledged to reduce taxes, and I kept my word. And we have gotten results for the American people. The recession was one of the shallowest in American history.

Over the last 3 years, our economy has grown at the fastest rate of any major industrialized nation. The homeownership rate in America is at an alltime high. Farm and ranch income is up. In the past 13 months we've added more than 1.9 million new jobs. The unemployment rate in America is 5.4 percent, lower than the average rate of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. The unemployment rate in Florida is 4.5 percent. This economy is moving forward, and we're not going to go back to the days of tax and spend.

To make sure jobs are here in America, to make sure we continue to be a place where people can realize their dreams, America must be the best place in the world to do business. We need to reduce the burden of regulations on our job creators. We need to do something about the junk lawsuits that are threatening the small-business job creators.

To create jobs here in America, Congress needs to pass my energy plan. It's a plan that encourages the use of renewables like ethanol and biodiesel. It's a plan that encourages conservation. It encourages new technologies like clean coal technologies. It encourages increased domestic production in environmentally friendly ways. We will not drill off the coast of Florida. To keep jobs here, we must become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

To create jobs here, we need to reject economic isolationism. See, we open up our markets for products from overseas, and that's good for you. If you have more products to choose from, you're likely to get that which you want at a better price and higher quality. That's how the market works. Rather than shutting down our market, we're working to convince others to open up theirs. I'm saying to China, "You treat us the way we treat you." We can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere, so long as the rules are fair.

To make sure this economy grows, we've got to be wise about how we spend your money and keep your taxes low. Now, my opponent has his own history on the economy.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. In 20 years as a Senator from Massachusetts, he has built a record of a Senator from Massachusetts. He's voted to raise taxes 98 times.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Think about that. He's been there 20 years. That's a vote for a tax increase about five times every year.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I would call it a pattern. He can run from his record, but he cannot hide.

Now, the Senator is promising not to raise taxes for anyone who earns less than $200,000 a year. He said that with a straight face. The problem is, to keep that promise he would have to break almost all of his other ones. See, he has promised more than $2.2 trillion of new Federal spending. That's trillion, with a "T." And to pay for it he said, aw, he's just going to tax the rich. You know, we've heard that before. You can't raise enough money by taxing the rich to pay for $2.2 trillion of new spending, so there's a gap—a gap between the promise and a gap between what he can deliver. And guess who usually has to fill that gap?

Audience members. We do!

The President. Yes. I'll tell you what else is wrong with taxing the rich. The rich hire lawyers and accountants for reason: to slip the bill and pass it on to you. We're not going to let him tax you; we're going to carry Florida and win a great victory in November.

When I came into office, our public schools had been waiting decades for hopeful reform. Fortunately, you had a Governor that did not allow the wait. See, he knows what

I know, that too many of our children were being shuffled through, grade after grade, year after year, without learning the basics. I pledged to restore accountability to our schools and end the soft bigotry of low expectations, and I kept my word. Our children are making sustained gains in reading and math. We're closing an achievement gap for minority students. We're making progress in our schools, and we're not going to go back to the old days of mediocrity and low standards.

We have a changing world, and most new jobs are filled by people with at least 2 years of a college education. Yet, only one in four of our students gets there. That's why we will fund early intervention programs at our high schools to help at-risk students. That's why we'll place a new focus on math and science. Over time, we'll require a rigorous exam before graduation. By raising performance in our high schools, by increasing and expanding Pell grants for low- and middle-income families, we will help more Americans start their career with a college diploma.

When I came into office, we had a problem with Medicare. Medicine was changing, but Medicare was not. Let me give you an example. Medicare would pay tens of thousands of dollars for heart surgery but would not pay a dime for the prescription drugs that could prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. That wasn't fair to our seniors. It certainly was not fair to the taxpayers. I pledged to bring Republicans and Democrats together to strengthen and modernize Medicare for our seniors, and I kept my word. Seniors and getting discounts on medicine. And beginning in 2006, all seniors will be able to get prescription drug coverage under Medicare.

We're moving forward on health care, and there's more to do. We need to make sure health care is available and affordable for our people. We need a safety net for those with the greatest needs. I believe in community health centers, places where the poor and the indigent can get health care. In a new term, we'll make sure every poor county in America has a community health center. We'll do more to make sure poor children are fully subscribed in our programs for low-income families.

We'll do more to make sure health care is affordable. Listen, most of the uninsured are employees of small businesses. Small businesses are having trouble affording health care. To help workers get the health care they need, we should allow small businesses to join together so they can buy insurance at the same discount that big businesses get to do. We will expand health savings accounts so workers and small businesses are able to pay lower premiums and people can save tax-free in an account they call their own.

To make sure health care is available and affordable, we will do something about the junk lawsuits that are running up the cost of health care and running good docs out of practice. By forcing doctors to practice defensive medicine, medical lawsuits cost the Government about $28 billion a year.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. When we say "cost the Government," that means they're costing you, the taxpayer.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. These lawsuits drive up insurance premiums, which drive good doctors out of practice. I've met ob-gyns that are—say, "I can't practice. I can't practice medicine anymore." I met the patients of ob-gyns, anxious women who drive miles to meet a doc. The system is not working. There's a big difference in this campaign. My opponent has voted against medical liability reform. I am for medical liability reform—now. And I will work with Senator Mel Martinez to get it done.

My opponent has a health care proposal of his own, a plan for bigger and more intrusive Government.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Now, the other day in the debate he said, when it comes to his health care plan, and I quote, "The Government has nothing to do with it." I could barely contain myself. [*Laughter*] The facts are that 8 out of 10 people who get health care under Senator Kerry's plan would be placed on a Government program.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He said the plan would help small businesses. Yet a small-business group studied the plan and concluded it was

an overpriced albatross that would saddle small businesses with 225 new mandates. I want to help small businesses. I don't want to saddle them with Government mandates.

Listen, the choice is clear when it comes to health care. My opponent wants to move in the direction of Government-run health care. I believe the health decisions ought to be made by patients and doctors, not by officials in Washington, DC. He can run, but he cannot hide.

I've set out policies that move America toward an optimistic vision. I believe our country can and must become an ownership society. There's an old saying, no one ever washes a rental car. [*Laughter*] You see, when you own something, you care about it. When you own something, you have a vital stake in the future of our country.

That's why we're encouraging entrepreneurship. Every time a small business is started, someone is achieving the American Dream. We're encouraging health savings accounts so people have the security of managing and owning their own health care account. We will continue to encourage homeownership. I love the idea that more and more Americans from all walks of life are opening up the door where they live and saying, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property."

In a new term, we'll take the next, great step to build an ownership society by strengthening Social Security. In the 2000 campaign, you might remember the ads that were saying, "If George W. gets in, the seniors will not get their checks." The seniors got their checks, and our seniors will continue to get their checks. Baby boomers are in pretty good shape when it comes to Social Security. We're okay.

But we need to worry about our children and our grandchildren. People are understandably worried about whether Social Security will be around when our children and grandchildren need it. We must think differently. To strengthen Social Security, we must allow younger workers to save some of their payroll taxes in a personal savings account, a personal savings account they call their own.

I believe it is the President's problem to solve problems—the President's job to solve problems, not to pass them on to future generations. My opponent has a different point of view. He wants to maintain the status quo when it comes to Social Security.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He's against the reforms we're talking about when it comes to Social Security, and he's against just about every other reform that gives more authority and control to the individual. On issue after issue, from Medicare without choices to schools with less accountability to higher taxes, he takes the side of more Government control.

There's a label for that. There's a word for that. It's called liberalism. That's what it's called. He doesn't like that label. He dismisses it as just a word. He must have seen it differently when he told a newspaper, "I am a liberal and proud of it." See, he's the kind of—got a voting record that makes Ted Kennedy look like the senior—the conservative Senator from Massachusetts. He can run, but he cannot hide.

I have a different record and a different philosophy. I do not believe in big Government, and I do not believe that Government should be indifferent. I'm a compassionate conservative. I believe in policies that empower people to improve their lives, not try to run their lives. I believe we ought to help men and women find the skills and tools necessary to prosper in a time of change. So we're helping all Americans to have a future of dignity and independence, and that is how I will continue to lead our country for 4 more years.

In a time of change, some things do not change, the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. In times of change, we must support institutions that give our lives direction and purpose, our families, our schools, our religious congregations. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every being counts. We stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. We stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

My opponent's words on these issues are a little muddy, but his record is plenty clear.

He says he supports the institution of marriage but voted against the Defense of Marriage Act.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He voted against the ban on the brutal practice of partial-birth abortion.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He described the Reagan years as a time of moral darkness.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. There is a mainstream in American politics, and my opponent sits on the far left bank. He can run, but he cannot hide.

This election will also determine how America responds to the continuing threat of terrorism. The most solemn duty of the American President is to protect the American people. If America shows uncertainty or weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

Since that terrible morning of September the 11th, 2001, we fought the terrorists across the Earth, not for pride, not for power, but because the lives of our citizens are at stake. Our strategy is clear. We're defending the homeland. We're reforming and strengthening our intelligence capabilities. We're transforming our military. I repeat, the All-Volunteer Army will remain an all-volunteer army. We are staying on the offensive. We will strike the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. We will spread freedom and liberty. And we will prevail.

Our strategy is succeeding. Think about the world as it was some 3½ years ago. Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida. Pakistan was a transit point for terrorist groups. Saudi Arabia was fertile ground for terrorist fundraising. Libya was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons. Iraq was a dangerous place and a gathering threat. And Al Qaida was largely unchallenged as it planned attacks.

Because we acted, because the United States of America led, Afghanistan is a free nation and an ally in the war against terror; Pakistan is capturing terrorist leaders; Saudi Arabia is making raids and arrests; Libya is dismantling its weapons programs; the army of a free Iraq is fighting for freedom; and more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members and associates have been brought to justice.

We are standing with the peoples of a free Afghanistan and Iraq. It's amazing to say the words "free Afghanistan" and a "free Iraq." I want you to remind your children and grandchildren what has taken place in Afghanistan in the 3½ short years. It wasn't all that long ago that young girls couldn't go to school in Afghanistan, or their mothers were taken into the public square and whipped because they wouldn't toe the line of the ideologues of hate. And yet, because we acted in our self-interest, because we acted to secure our country, the people of Afghanistan are liberated, and by the millions, showed up to vote in a Presidential election. The first voter in the Presidential election in Afghanistan was a 19-year-old woman. Freedom is on the march. Freedom is taking hold in a part of the world that no one ever dreamed would be free, and that makes America more secure.

There will be elections in Iraq this January. Think how far that country has come from the days of torture chambers and mass graves and the brutal dictates of a brutal tyrant. You see, it's important that we continue to spread freedom, because free societies will help us keep the peace. Free societies will no longer feed resentments and breed violence for export. Free governments in the Middle East will fight the terrorists instead of harboring them, and that will help us keep the peace and make America more secure.

And so our mission is clear. We will help these countries train armies and police so the people of Afghanistan and Iraq can do the hard work of defending their freedom. We will help them get on the path to stability and democracy as quickly as possible, and then our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

We have a great United States military. It is great because of the dedication and the character of those who wear the uniform. I want to thank the veterans who are here today for having set such a great example to those who wear the uniform. I want to thank the military families who are here today for their sacrifices. You can be certain of this:

Your loved ones are answering one of the great calls of American history. They're defending our country against ruthless enemies. They're spreading freedom and hope. They are winning the war on terror.

And our Nation is keeping our commitments to those who serve and to their families. We have increased basic pay in the military by 21 percent since I've been the Commander in Chief. We've increased health benefits and Federal support for schools on bases across the country. We've reduced out-of-pocket expense for off-base housing to zero for our military families. We are supporting our Guard and our Reserve troops and families. We're spending 14 billion for construction and maintenance on Guard and Reserve facilities. We're extending military health benefits to those in the Guard and Reserves. We're increasing—we will increase monthly education benefits for those in the Guard and Reserves.

Our single most important responsibility is to make sure our military families are well-treated and our military has all the tools necessary to do their missions. And that's why in September of 2003, I went to the United States Congress and asked for $87 billion of supplemental funding to support our troops in harm's way. This was essential funding. Most Members of the United States Congress understood how important the funding was. As a matter of fact, only 12 Members of the United States Senate voted against the funding for our troops——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. ——2 of whom are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. When you're out rounding up the vote, remind people of this startling statistic: Only 4 Members of the Senate—4 out of 100—voted to authorize the use of force and then voted against providing funding for our troops.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And two of those four were my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. You might remember my opponents famous quote. When they asked him about his vote, he said, "I actually did vote for the $87 billion, right before I voted against it."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He's given a lot of explanations for that vote since. One of the most interesting ones of all, he said, "Well, the whole thing was a complicated matter." There's nothing complicated about supporting our troops in harm's way.

Last Sunday was the one-year anniversary of Senator Kerry's vote against funding for our troops. My opponents many and conflicting positions on this issue are a case study into why his contradictions call into question his credibility and ability to lead our Nation.

In September 2003, as the $87 billion funding package was being debated, Senator Kerry said this on national TV: "It would be irresponsible to abandon our troops by voting against it." That is, against the $87 billion. And then, of course, just one month later, he did exactly the opposite. You know, it's important for our fellow citizens to wonder what changed his mind in one short month. Well, his opponent in the Democrat primary, Howard Dean, was gaining ground as an antiwar candidate, just about the time he changed his mind. See, apparently, my opponent decided supporting the troops, even while in harm's way, was not as important as shoring up his political position.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. At a time of great threat to our country, at a time of great challenge in the world, the Commander in Chief must stand on principle, not on the shifting sands of political convenience.

Senator Kerry's vote against supporting our troops in combat is part of a pattern. He has consistently opposed the weapons our troops are using to win the war on terror. He opposed the B–1 bomber. He opposed the B–2 stealth bomber. He opposed the modernized F–14D. He opposed the Apache helicopter. He opposed the anti-missile launchers that we've been using, the Patriot missile system. He has a 20-year history of weakness. He can run from his record, but he cannot hide.

Let me just give you one more piece of evidence about why my opponent is not prepared and equipped to be the Commander in Chief. He believes that America should

pass a "global test" before we defend ourselves.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. That's what he said. See, the problem with a "global test" is the Senator can never pass it. In 1990, the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution supporting action to remove Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. The international community was united. Countries throughout the world joined our coalition. Yet, even after United Nations approval, Senator Kerry voted against the authorization for the use of force.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. You might remember during the debates in the campaign he said it was a "mistake" to remove Saddam Hussein. He would have done it differently. He would have passed another United Nations Security Council resolution——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. ——as if the first 16 or 17, you know, had an effect. [*Laughter*]

See, we'll continue to build strong alliances. We'll work with friends. But I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. In this time of uncertainty and challenge, the Commander in Chief must be steadied and principled and must use every asset at our disposal to protect the American people.

I believe in the transformational power of liberty. I'll tell you what I mean by that. One of our friends, Laura and my friends in the international community is Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan. That probably doesn't seem like much of a big deal to you, except for the fact that 60 years ago, Japan was a sworn enemy of the United States of America. We were at war with the Japanese. My dad—our dad fought against the Japanese. Your dads and granddads did as well. It was a brutal war.

And after the war was over, Harry S. Truman, President of the United States, believed that liberty could transform an enemy into an ally. There were a lot of skeptics during that time, and you can imagine why. Japan was the enemy. Many families had been turned upside down because of death in World War II. But there was this belief in the country that if we helped Japan become a democracy, the world would be better off for it. Today, because people held that belief, I sit at the table with the Prime Minister of a former enemy, talking about how to keep the peace we all want.

Someday, someday, an American President will be sitting down with the duly-elected leader from Iraq, talking about the peace, and our children and our grandchildren will be better of for it.

I believe that millions in the Middle East plead in silence for their freedom. I believe women in the Middle East want to live in a free society. I believe mothers and dads want to raise their children in a free world. I believe all these things because freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. This is a time that requires firm resolve, clear vision, and a deep faith in the values that makes this a great nation.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I will never forget. There were workers in hardhats yelling at me at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." I remember the fellow who grabbed me by the arm. He looked me straight in the eye, and he said, "Do not let me down." Ever since that day, I wake up every morning thinking about how to better protect America. I will never relent in defending our country, whatever it takes.

Four years ago, when I traveled your great State, I made a pledge that if you gave me the chance to serve, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office to which I had been elected. With your help, I will do so for 4 more years.

Thanks for coming. God bless. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:15 a.m. at Al Lang Field at the Progress Energy Park. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida;

Florida Attorney General Charlie Crist; Mayor Rick Baker of St. Petersburg, FL; Kitty Martinez, wife of Florida senatorial candidate Mel R. Martinez; country music entertainer Lee Greenwood; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Remarks in New Port Richey, Florida

October 19, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming. If you're looking for sunshine, Florida is the place to come. I'm looking for votes, and Florida is the place to come. Thank you all for coming out. I'm here to ask for not only your vote, I'm here to ask for your help. Get your friends and neighbors to go to the polls. And when you get them headed to the polls, remind them, if they want a stronger America, a safer America, and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

I've got a lot of reasons why you ought to put me back in, but perhaps the most important one of all is so that Laura will have 4 more years as the First Lady. When I asked her to marry me, she said, "Fine, just so long as I never have to give a speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay, you got a deal." Fortunately, she didn't hold me to that deal. She's giving a lot of speeches, and the American people see a warm, compassionate, strong First Lady.

I'm proud of my runningmate, Dick Cheney. Now, look, I admit it, he doesn't have the waviest hair in the race. [*Laughter*] I didn't pick him because of his hairdo. [*Laughter*] I picked him because of his judgment, his experience. I picked him because he can get the job done for the American people.

I'm proud of my brother Jeb. What a great Governor for Florida. I appreciate the strength and compassion he showed during the hurricanes. Florida showed that out of adversity can come good, neighbors loving neighbors, people helping people who hurt. We'll continue to do everything we can to help the people of Florida get back on their feet.

By the way, brother Marvin is with us too. [*Applause*] Yes. We love our family. And I love campaigning with my family.

I want to thank Sam for his service to the United States of America. He was in the first gulf war. He's in the second incursion into Iraq. And our country is more secure because of his service.

I want to thank Sheriff Bob White for joining us today. Sheriff, thanks. Appreciate it. I want to thank Daron Norwood, the country music singer, for being with us today.

I want to thank Al Cardenas and all the grassroots activists who are here today. Thank you for putting up the signs. Thank you for making the phone calls. Thank you for working the polls. With your help, we will carry Florida again and win a great victory in November.

In the last few years, the American people have gotten to know me. They know my blunt way of speaking. I get that from Mother. [*Laughter*] They know that I occasionally mangle the English language. [*Laughter*] I get that from my father. [*Laughter*] They also know that I tell you exactly what I'm going to do, and I keep my word.

I enjoyed our debates. They showed the big differences between my opponent and me. We have different records. We have different views of the future. My record is one of reforming education, lowering taxes, providing prescription drug coverage for our seniors, improving homeland protections, and waging an aggressive war against the ideologues of hate.

The Senator's record of 20 years is out of the mainstream. Instead of articulating a vision or a positive agenda for the future, the Senator is relying on a litany of complaints and old-style scare tactics. As proven by his record and a series of contradictions in this campaign, my opponent will say anything he thinks will benefit him politically at the time.

I will do what I've said I will do. We will keep the promise of Social Security for our seniors. We will not have a draft; we will have an all-volunteer army. On November 2d, the people of America will reject the politics of fear and vote for an agenda of hope and opportunity and security for every American.

When I came into office, the stock market had been in decline for 6 months. And then we had a recession. To help families and to get this economy growing again, I pledged to reduce taxes. I kept my word, and the results are clear. The recession was one of the shallowest in American history.

Over the last 3 years, our economy has grown at a rate faster than any major industrialized nation. Homeownership rate is at an alltime high in America. We added 1.9 million new jobs since August of 2003. The national unemployment rate is 5.4 percent, lower than the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. The unemployment rate in Florida is 4.5 percent. This economy is moving forward, and we're not going to go back to the old days of tax and spend.

To make sure jobs are here in America, America must be the best place in the world to do business. We need to reduce the regulations on our job creators. We need to do something about these frivolous lawsuits that hurt the small businesses.

Listen, to keep jobs here, Congress needs to pass my energy plan. It encourages conservation. It encourages the use of renewables. It encourages clean coal technology. It encourages environmentally friendly ways to explore for natural gas. We will not explore off the coast of Florida. What I'm telling you is in order to keep jobs here, we must become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

To keep jobs here, we've got to reject economic isolationism. I believe in free trade. I believe in fair trade. I know Americans compete with anytime—anybody, anytime, anywhere, so long as the rules are fair.

To keep jobs here, we've got to be wise about how we spend your money and keep your taxes low. My opponent has his own history on the economy.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. In 20 years as a Senator from Massachusetts, he's built the record of a Senator from Massachusetts. [*Laughter*] He voted to increase taxes 98 times in his 20 years. That's about five times a year. I would call that a pattern—[*laughter*]—a predictable pattern. He can run from his record, but he cannot hide.

Now he's promising not to raise taxes for anyone who earns less than $200,000 a year. He said that with a straight face. [*Laughter*] The problem with that is, to keep that promise you'd have to break all the other ones. See, he's promised over $2.2 trillion in new spending. That's with a "T." In order to pay for it, he said, well, all he's going to do is tax the rich. You can't raise enough money by taxing the rich to pay for $2.2 trillion. There is a gap between what he's promised and what he can raise. Guess who generally fills the gap? You do.

Let me tell you what else is wrong with taxing the rich. The rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason: to slip the bill and to pass it on to you. We're not going to let Senator Kerry tax you; we're going to carry Florida and win a great victory on November the 2d.

When I came into office, our public schools had been waiting decades for hopeful reform. Fortunately, you had a Governor here in Florida who enacted hopeful reform. Too many of our children were shuffled through school without learning the basics. I pledged to restore accountability to our schools and to end the soft bigotry of low expectations. I kept my word. We're seeing results. Children are making sustained gains in reading and math. We're closing achievement gaps all over this country, and we're not going to go back to the days of low expectations and mediocrity.

When I came into office, we had a problem in Medicare. Medicine was changing; Medicare was not. For example, Medicare would pay tens of thousands of dollars for heart surgery but not one dime for the prescription drugs that could prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. It was not fair to our seniors. I pledged to bring Republicans and Democrats together to strengthen and modernize Medicare for our seniors. I kept my word.

We're moving forward on health care. There is more to do. We need to make sure health care is available and affordable. We need a safety net for those with the greatest needs. I believe in community health centers, places where the poor and the indigent can get health care. We will make sure that poor children are fully subscribed in our programs for low-income families so they can get the health care they need.

To make sure health care is affordable, we must recognize that most of the uninsured work for small businesses. Small businesses are having trouble affording health care. To help our workers get health care, we should allow small businesses to join together so

they can buy insurance at the same discounts as big companies get to do. We will expand health savings accounts so workers and small businesses are able to pay lower premiums and people can save tax-free in a health care account they call their own.

To make sure health care is available and affordable, we must do something about the junk lawsuits that are running up the cost of medicine and running good doctors out of practice. There is a clear difference in this campaign. My opponent has consistently voted against medical liability reform. I stand for medical liability reform, and I know I can work with the next Senator from Florida, Mel Martinez, to get that reform done.

The Senator has a health care proposal of his own, a plan for bigger and more intrusive Government. The other day, he tried to tell Americans that when it comes to his health care plan, and I quote, "The Government has nothing to do with it." [*Laughter*] I could barely contain myself. [*Laughter*] The facts are that 8 out of 10 people who get health care under Senator Kerry's plan would be placed on a Government program. He says his plan would help small businesses. Yet, groups that studied this plan concluded it was an overpriced albatross that would saddle small businesses with 225 new mandates.

I have a different view. I want to help our small businesses, not saddle them with a bunch of Government rules. The choice is clear. My opponent wants to move in the direction of Government-run health care. I believe health decisions should be made by doctors and patients, not by officials in Washington, DC. He can run, but he cannot hide.

I've set out policies that move our country toward a more hopeful and optimistic vision. I believe our country can and must be an ownership society. There's an old saying: No one ever washes a rental car—[*laughter*]—a lot of wisdom in that statement. When you own something, you care about it. When you own something, you have a vital stake in the future of your country. That's why we're encouraging entrepreneurship. Every time a small business is started, someone is achieving the American Dream.

We're encouraging health savings accounts so people have the security of owning and managing their own health care. We will continue to encourage homeownership in America. I love it when somebody opens the door where they live and says, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property."

In a new term, we'll take the next step to build an ownership society by strengthening Social Security. Let me talk about Social Security right quick. In 2000, people traveled this State saying, "If George W. gets elected, our seniors will not get their checks."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Our seniors must remember, you got your checks. You will continue to get their checks, no matter what they try to tell you. And baby boomers, we're in pretty good shape when it comes to Social Security.

But we need to worry about our children and our grandchildren. The job of the President is to confront problems, not to pass them on to future generations and future Presidents. To make sure Social Security is around when our children grow up, we must allow younger workers to save some of their own payroll taxes in a personal savings account that earns better interest, a personal savings account they call their own and an account the Government cannot take away.

When it comes to Social Security, my opponent wants to maintain the status quo. That is not leadership. He's against these Social Security reforms. He's against just about every other reform that gives more authority and control to the people. On issue after issue, from Medicare without choices to schools without accountability to higher taxes, he takes the side of more bureaucracy and more Government.

There is a word for that attitude. It is called liberalism. He dismisses that as a label. He must have seen it differently when he told a newspaper, "I am a liberal, and I'm proud of it."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. The nonpartisan National Journal did a study and named him the most liberal Member of the United States Senate. That takes a lot of hard work. [*Laughter*]

I have a different record and a different philosophy. I do not believe in big Government, and I do not believe that Government should be indifferent. That is called compassionate conservatism. I believe in policies

that empower people to improve their lives, not try to run their lives. I believe we must continue to help men and women find the schools—skills and tools to prosper in a time of change. And so we're helping all Americans find dignity and independence. And I will continue to lead our country for 4 more years with that philosophy in mind.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. In this time of change, some things do not change, the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. In a time of change, we must support the institutions that gives our lives purpose and direction, our families, our schools, our religious congregations. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every being counts. We stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. We stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

My opponent's words on these issues are a little muddy, but his record is plenty clear. He says he supports the institution of marriage but voted against the Defense of Marriage Act. He voted against a ban on the practice of partial-birth abortion.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He's described the Reagan years as a time of moral darkness.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. There is a mainstream in American politics, and my opponent sits on the far left bank. He can run, but he cannot hide.

This election will also determine how America responds to the continuing danger of terrorism. The most solemn duty of the American President is to protect the American people. If America shows uncertainty or weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

Our strategy is clear. We are defending the homeland. We are reforming and strengthening our intelligence services. We are transforming our military. The All-Volunteer Army will remain an all-volunteer army. We are staying on the offensive. We're striking the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. We will spread freedom and liberty. And we will prevail.

Our strategy is succeeding. Think about the world as it was 3½ years ago. Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida. Pakistan was a transit point for terrorist groups. Saudi Arabia was fertile ground for fundraising. Libya was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons. Iraq was a dangerous place and a gathering threat. And Al Qaida was largely unchallenged as it planned attacks.

Today, because we acted, Afghanistan is free and is an ally on the war on terror; Pakistan is capturing terrorist leaders; Saudi Arabia is making raids and arrests; Libya is dismantling its weapons programs; the army of a free Iraq is fighting for freedom; and more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members and associates have been brought to justice.

We're standing with the peoples of a free Afghanistan and Iraq. I want you to remind your children about the historic moment that took place when the Afghan citizens went to vote. It was all but 3 years ago that these people lived under the brutal, brutal reign of the Taliban. Young girls couldn't go to school. Mothers were taken and whipped in the public square because they didn't toe the line of these ideologues of hate. But because we acted in our self-defense, millions went to the polls. The first voter in Afghan—in the Afghanistan Presidential election was a 19-year-old woman. Freedom is on the march.

There will be elections in Iraq in January. Think about how far that country has come from the days of mass graves and torture chambers and the brutal reign of a tyrant who hated America. It's important that freedom be on the march. We're more secure when societies are free. Free societies will be hopeful societies which no longer feed resentments and breed violence for export. Free governments in the Middle East will fight the terrorists instead of harboring them. Free societies will be peaceful societies. Freedom means America will be more secure.

And so our mission is clear. We will help the people in these countries, in Afghanistan and Iraq, train their armies, train their police, so they can do the hard work of defending

freedom. We will help the countries get on the path of stability and democracy as quickly as possible, and then our troops will return home with the honor they have earned.

I want to thank those who wear our uniform. I want to thank the veterans who have set such a great example for those who wear the uniform. I want to thank the military families who are with us today.

Under my leadership and working with the Congress, our Nation is keeping our commitments to those who serve and to their families. We've increased basic pay in the military by 21 percent. We've increased health benefits and Federal support for schools on our bases. We've reduced the out-of-pocket expenses for off-base housing to zero for our military families. We're supporting our Guard and our Reserves. We're spending 14 billion for construction and maintenance for Guard and Reserve facilities. We've extended military health care to our Guard and Reserve families. We're making sure that our troops have what they need in order to complete their missions.

And that's why I went to the Congress and requested $87 billion of funding in September of 2003. And the support in the Congress was strong, except for 12 Senators voted against funding for our troops——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. ——2 of whom were my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. When you're out rounding up the vote, remind the people of this startling statistic: There were only four Members of the Senate who voted to authorize the use of force and voted against supporting our troops in combat—only four—two of whom are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. So they asked him about the vote, and he said, in perhaps the most famous quote of the 2004 campaign, "I actually did vote for the $87 billion, before I voted against it."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Sunday was the one-year anniversary of Senator Kerry's vote against funding for our troops. My opponent's many and conflicting positions on this issue are a case study into why his contradictions call into question his credibility and his ability to lead our Nation.

In September 2003, as the $87 billion funding package was being debated, Senator Kerry, on national TV, said it would be "irresponsible to abandon our troops by voting against it." That's what he said. Just one month later, he did exactly the opposite. And so you wonder why. What happened to change the Senator's mind so abruptly in one month? Well, his opponent in the Democrat primary, Howard Dean, was gaining ground as an antiwar candidate. Senator Kerry apparently decided supporting the troops, even while they were in harm's way, was not as important as shoring up his own political position.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. At a time of great threat to our country, at a time of great challenge in the world, the Commander in Chief must stand on principle, not on the shifting sands of political convenience.

His vote against supporting our troops in combat is part of a pattern. He opposed the B–1 bomber. He opposed the B–2 stealth bomber. He opposed modernization of the F–14D, all of which helped us secure our country in Afghanistan and Iraq. He opposed the Apache helicopter. He opposed the Patriot missile system. My opponent has built a 20-year record of military weakness. He can run from his record——

Audience members. But he can't hide!

The President. In our debate, Senator Kerry proposed we should pass a "global test" before we defend ourselves.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I'm not making that up. That's exactly what he said. I was standing right there. [*Laughter*] The problem with a "global test" is the Senator cannot ever pass it. In 1990, the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution supporting action to remove Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. The international community was united. Countries throughout the world joined our coalition. Yet even after United Nations approval, Senator Kerry voted against authorization for the use of force.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. If that didn't pass a "global test," nothing will pass a "global test." Listen,

I'll continue to build strong alliances. We'll work with our friends and allies. But I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

I believe in the transformational power of liberty. After World War II, after we defeated the Japanese, Harry Truman believed in the transformational power of liberty to convert an enemy into an ally. A lot of people doubted that. A lot of people wondered whether an enemy could ever become a democracy. But there were strong beliefs. And as a result of that belief, today, I sit down at the table with the head of a former enemy, Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan, talking about the peace we all want.

Someday, a duly elected leader of Iraq will be sitting down with an American President, talking about the peace in the greater Middle East, and our children and our grandchildren will be better off for it.

I believe that millions in the Middle East plead in silence for their freedom. I believe women in the Middle East want to live in a free society. I believe mothers and dads in the Middle East want their children to grow up in a free and peaceful world. I believe all these things because freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. This is a time that requires firm resolve and clear vision and a deep faith in the values that makes this a great nation.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I will never forget. I will never forget the workers in hardhats who were yelling at me at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." I'll never forget the man that grabbed me by my arm and looked me in the eye, and he said, "Do not let me down." Ever since that day, I wake up every morning thinking about how to better protect our country. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

Four years ago, when I traveled your great State, I made a pledge that if you gave me a chance to serve, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office to which I had been elected. With your help, I will do so for 4 more years.

God bless. Thank you for coming. Thank you all. Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:34 a.m. at Sims Park. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; Bob White, sheriff, Pasco County, FL; Al Cardenas, former chair, Republican Party of Florida; Mel R. Martinez, senatorial candidate in Florida; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Remarks in The Villages, Florida

October 19, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming today. I am proud to be the first sitting President ever to have visited The Villages. The other ones missed out on a lot. Thanks for having me. Thanks for coming. This is a huge crowd, for which I am grateful. I told Jeb it looks like a beautiful day in The Villages. He said, "It's always a beautiful day in The Villages."

I'm traveling your State to ask for the vote. I think you got to get out amongst the people and say, I want your vote. I'm going to give you some reasons to put me back into office. I also want your help. You need to go to your friends and neighbors. Tell them we have a duty in our free society to vote. When you get them headed to the polls, remind them, if they want a safer America, a stronger America, a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

My one regret is that Laura is not with me today.

Audience members. Aw-w-w!

The President. I know, that's generally the reaction. [*Laughter*] I'm going the give you some reasons, as I said, to put me in, but perhaps the most important one of all is so that Laura is the First Lady for 4 more years. When I met her again—see, we went to the seventh grade together in San Jacinto Junior High in Midland, Texas. When I met her again, she was a public school librarian. I said, "Will you marry me?" She said, "Fine, just so long as I never have to give a speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay, you got a deal."

Fortunately, she did not hold me to that promise. She's giving a lot of speeches, and when she does, the American people see a strong, warm, compassionate, great First Lady.

I am proud of my runningmate, Dick Cheney. I readily concede, he does not have the waviest hair in the race. [*Laughter*] I did not pick him for his hairdo. [*Laughter*] I picked him because of his experience and sound judgment.

I am very proud of my brother, the Governor of Florida, Jeb Bush. He is a strong, consistent leader. You do not have to worry about him shifting his political thoughts because of a poll or a focus group. And when times were tough during the four hurricanes, Jeb led this State with resolve and compassion. Brother Marvin is with us today as well, and I want to thank Marv for coming. I love to be with my family. I get great strength from my faith, my family, and my friends.

I want to thank Carey Baker for his service, not only in the Armed Forces but in the statehouse. As I came up on the stage, Mrs. Baker informed me they'll be having a child tomorrow. [*Laughter*] Let's just make sure it's tomorrow. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Congressman Cliff Stearns for his leadership in the House of Representatives. I appreciate the service of the State chief financial officer, Tom Gallagher. I want to thank all the other State and local officials who are here.

I want to thank Ralph Reed, the Bush-Cheney '04 southeast regional chair, for his leadership and friendship. I want to thank Carole Jean Jordan, who's the Republican Party Florida chairman. I want to thank all the people who are involved in grassroots politics. I want to thank those of you who are putting up the signs. I want to thank those of you who are making the phone calls. With your help, there is no doubt in my mind, we will carry Florida again and win a great victory on November the 2d.

Finally, I want to thank my friend Mark Wills, the country singer who has been entertaining you today.

In the last few years, the American people have come to know me. They know my blunt way of speaking. I get that from my mother. [*Laughter*] They know that sometimes I mangle the English language. I get that from my father. [*Laughter*] Americans also know that I tell you exactly what I'm going to do, and I keep my word.

I enjoyed telling the people what I was going to do, during our three debates. Those were important debates because they showed the clear differences between my opponent and me. We have different records. We have very different plans for the future. My record is one of reforming education, of lowering taxes, of providing prescription drug coverage for our seniors, of improving homeland protections, and of waging an aggressive war against the ideologues of hate. I enjoyed the chance to lay out my vision for the future.

Instead of articulating a vision or a positive agenda for the future, the Senator, my opponent, is relying on a litany of complaints and an old-style scare tactic.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. As proven by his record and a series of contradictions in this campaign, my opponent will say anything he thinks will benefit him politically at the time. I will do what I have said I will do. We will keep the promise of Social Security for our seniors. And there will no draft as long as I'm the President. On November the 2d, the people of America will reject the politics of fear and vote for an agenda of hope and opportunity and security.

When I came into office, the stock market had been in serious decline for 6 months. And then we headed into a recession. To help families and to get this economy growing again, I pledged to reduce taxes. I kept my word. The results are clear. The recession was one of the shallowest in American history.

Over the last 3 years, our economy has grown at rates as fast as any in nearly 20 years. Today, the homeownership rate in America is at an alltime high. In the past 13 months, we've added more than 1.9 million new jobs. The unemployment rate in America is 5.4 percent, lower than the average rate of the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s. The unemployment rate in Florida is 4.5 percent. This economy of ours is moving forward, and we're not going to go back to the days of tax and spend.

To make sure quality jobs are created here in America, America must be the best place in the world to do business. That means less regulations on our job creators. That means we will do something about the frivolous lawsuits that plague our small-business owners.

To keep jobs here, Congress needs to pass my energy plan. It's a plan that encourages conservation, a plan that encourages renewables, encourages new technologies. It's a plan that recognizes we can explore for natural gas in environmentally friendly ways. We will not drill off the coast of Florida. It's a plan that uses clean coal technology. To keep jobs here in America, America must be less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

To create jobs, we need to reject economic isolationism. We've opened up our markets from products for overseas, and that is good for the American consumer. See, the market works this way. If you have more products to choose from, you're likely to get that which you want at a better price and higher quality. So instead of shutting down our market, what we'll continue to do is open up other people's markets. I say to China, "You treat us the way we treat you." We can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere, so long as the playing field is level.

To make sure this economy continues to grow, we've got to be wise about how we spend your money and keep your taxes low. My opponent has his own history on the economy. In 20 years as a Senator from Massachusetts, he has built the record of a Senator from Massachusetts. [*Laughter*] He voted for higher taxes 98 times in his 20 years. That's about five times a year. I would call that a predictable pattern. [*Laughter*]

Now the Senator is promising not to raise taxes for anyone who earns less than $200,000 a year. He said that with a straight face. [*Laughter*] The problem is, to keep that promise he would have to break almost all of his other ones. He's made a lot of promises. He's promised over $2.2 trillion a program—of new spending. He said he's going to raise the money by taxing the rich. You can't raise enough money by taxing the rich to raise 2.2 trillion. There is a gap, a gap between what he's promised and what he can raise. And guess who usually gets to fill the gap?

Audience members. We do!

The President. Yes. You've also heard that talk before about taxing the rich. The rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason: to slip the bill and pass it on to you. We're not going to let him tax you; we're going to carry Florida and win on November the 2d.

When I came in this office, our public schools had been waiting decades for hopeful reform. Fortunately, you had a Governor who had been providing hopeful reform. But too many of our children were shuffled through school, year after year, grade after grade, without learning the basics. I pledged to restore accountability to our schools and end the soft bigotry of low expectations, and I kept my word. We're seeing the results. Our children are making sustained gains in reading and math. We're closing achievement gaps all across America. And we're not going to go back to the days of low standards and mediocrity in the public schools in America.

When we came into office, we had a problem with Medicare. Medicine was changing; Medicare was not. And let me give you an example. Many here understand what I'm talking about. Medicare would pay hundreds of thousands of dollars for heart surgery but not one dime for the prescription drugs that could prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. That did not make any sense for people on Medicare. It didn't make any sense for the taxpayers of the country. I pledged to bring Republicans and Democrats together to strengthen and modernize Medicare for our seniors. I kept my word. Seniors are getting discounts on medicine. And beginning in 2006, all seniors will be able to get prescription drugs coverage under Medicare.

We have more work to do when it comes to moving forward with health care. I have practical plans to make sure health care is available and affordable. We need a safety net for those with the greatest need. I believe in community health centers, places where the poor and the indigent can get good preventative and primary care. In a new term, we'll make sure every poor county in America has a community health center. We will do more to make sure poor children are fully

subscribed in our programs for low-income families.

Do you realize that half of the working uninsured work for small businesses? Small businesses are having trouble affording health care. In order to help our workers get health care, in order to help small businesses, we must allow small businesses to pool together, to join together, so they can buy insurance at the same discounts big companies are able to do. We will continue to expand health savings accounts so workers and small businesses are able to pay lower premiums and people can save tax-free in a health care account they call their own.

To make sure health care is available and affordable, we must do something about the junk lawsuits that are running up the cost of health care and running good docs out of practice. By forcing doctors to practice defensive medicine, medical lawsuits cost the Government, and therefore you, about $28 billion a year. Lawsuits drive up insurance premiums, which drive good doctors out of practice. I have met too many ob-gyns who are worried about being able to stay in practice. I have met too many of their patients, women who are worried about getting the health care they need.

See, you can't be pro-doctor, pro-patient, and pro-personal-injury-lawyer at the same time. You have to choose. My opponent made his choice, and he put a personal injury lawyer on the ticket. I made my choice. I'm standing with the docs and the patients. I am for medical liability reform—now.

And I urge you to vote for Mel Martinez in the Senate. He will join us in fighting for medical liability reform—now.

My opponent has a health care plan, a plan for bigger, more intrusive Government. The other day, he tried to tell the Americans that when it comes to his health care plan, and I quote, "The Government has nothing to do with it." I could barely contain myself. [*Laughter*] Facts are 8 out of 10 people who get health care under Senator Kerry's plan would be placed on a Government program. He said his plan helps small businesses, but yet, further study concluded that it is an overpriced albatross that would saddle small businesses with 225 new mandates.

I have a better idea. I want to help small businesses afford health care, not saddle them with new Government rules. The choice in this election is clear. My opponent wants to move in the direction of Government-run health care. I believe health decisions should be made by patients and doctors, not by officials in Washington, DC. He can run, but he cannot hide.

I have set out policies that move this country toward a positive and optimistic vision. I believe our country can and must become an ownership society. You know, there's an old saying, no one ever washes a rental car—[*laughter*]—a lot of wisdom in that statement. When you own something, you care about it. When you own something, you have a vital stake in the future of your country.

That's why we'll continue to encourage ownership. Every time a small business is started, someone is achieving the American Dream. That's why we're encouraging health savings accounts, so people have the security of owning their own health care plan. That's why we'll continue to spread the ownership of homes all across America. I love it when more and more people from all walks of life open up the door where they live and say, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property."

In a new term, we'll take the next step toward building an ownership society by strengthening Social Security. Now, let me remind you of something that took place in the 2000 campaign. They said in those political ads that, "If George W. gets elected, our seniors will not get their Social Security checks." You might remember those ads. I want you to remind your friends and neighbors, they got their checks. Nobody is going to take away the checks of those who are now on Social Security. And baby boomers like me, we're in pretty good shape when it comes to Social Security.

But we need to worry about our children and our grandchildren. We need to make sure Social Security is available for them. That is why I believe younger workers ought to be allowed to take some of their own payroll taxes and put it in a personal savings account that will earn better interest, a personal savings account they can call their own, an account the Government cannot take away.

My opponent wants to maintain the status quo when it comes to Social Security. That is unacceptable for younger Americans. I believe a President should solve problems, not pass them on to future generations or future Presidents. On issue after issue, from Medicare without choices to schools with less accountability to higher taxes on working Americans, my opponent takes the side of more centralized control and bigger Government.

There's a word for that attitude. It's called liberalism.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He dismisses it as simply a label. He must have seen it differently when he told a newspaper, "I am a liberal and proud of it." Don't take my word for it. Take the word of the nonpartisan National Journal magazine that did a study of voting records and named him the most liberal Member of the United States Senate. That takes a lot of hard work. [*Laughter*] It's hard to be more liberal than the likes of Ted Kennedy. He can run, but he cannot hide.

I have a very different record and a different philosophy. I do not believe in big Government, and I do not believe that Government should be indifferent. I am a compassionate conservative. I believe in policies that empower people to improve their lives, not try to run their lives. I believe we should help men and women find the skills and tools needed to prosper in a time of change. We're helping all Americans to have a future of dignity and independence, and that is how I will lead our Nation for 4 more years.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. In this time of change, some things do not change, the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. In a time of change, we must support the institutions that give our lives direction and purpose, our families, our schools, our places of worship. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every being counts. We stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. We stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

This election will also determine how America responds to the continuing danger of terrorism. The most solemn duty of the American President is to protect the American people. If America shows uncertainty or weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

Since that terrible morning of September the 11th, 2001, we have fought the terrorists across the Earth, not for pride, not for power, but because the lives of our citizens are at stake. Our strategy is clear. We're defending the homeland. We're reforming and strengthening our intelligence capabilities. We're transforming our military so the All-Volunteer Army will remain an all-volunteer army. We're staying on the offensive. We will strike the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. We will spread freedom and liberty. And we will prevail.

Our strategy is succeeding. Think about the world the way it was some 3½ years ago. Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida. Pakistan was a transit point for terrorist groups. Saudi Arabia was fertile ground for terrorist fundraising. Libya was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons. Iraq was a dangerous place and a gathering threat. And Al Qaida was largely unchallenged as it planned attacks.

Because we led, because the United States of America was firm in our resolve, Afghanistan is free and is now an ally in the war on terror; Pakistan is capturing terrorist leaders; Saudi Arabia is making raids and arrests; Libya is dismantling its weapons programs; the army of a free Iraq is fighting for freedom; and more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members and associates have been brought to justice.

We're standing with the people in Afghanistan and Iraq. I want the youngsters here to understand how profound history has changed because of the actions we took to defend ourselves. Think about Afghanistan. It wasn't all that long ago that the Taliban ran that country. These ideologues of hatred would not even allow young girls to go to school, and their mothers were taken into the public square and whipped if they didn't toe their line. Because we acted, because we upheld doctrine that said, "If you harbor a

terrorist, you're equally as guilty as the terrorist," millions of citizens went to vote in a Presidential election. The first voter in Afghanistan for the election of a President was a 19-year-old woman. Freedom is on the march. Freedom is on the march in a part of world that no one ever dreamt would be free.

In Iraq, there will be Presidential elections in several months. Think how far that country has come from the days of torture rooms and mass graves. No, we're standing with those people. When American gives its word, America must keep its word. And we're standing with them. And we're standing with them because we understand that free societies in the Middle East will be hopeful societies which no longer feed resentments and breed violence for export. Free governments in the Middle East will fight the terrorists instead of harboring them. And that will help us keep the peace.

Our strategy and our mission in Afghanistan and Iraq should be clear. We'll train the armies and the police in those countries so the people of Afghanistan and the people of Iraq can do the hard work of defending their freedom. We will get those countries on the path of stability and democracy as quickly as possible, and then our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

I am proud to be the Commander in Chief of a great United States military. I want to thank the veterans who are here for having set such a great example for those who wear the uniform. I want to thank the military families who are here.

The single most important responsibility is to make sure our military has all the tools and resources they need to complete their missions. That's why I went to the United States Congress in September of 2003 and asked for $87 billion of funding to support our troops in combat. I was very pleased with the overwhelming bipartisan support for that initiative. The support was so strong that only 12 Members of the United States Senate voted against the funding, 2 of whom were my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. As you're out gathering the vote, remind people of this startling fact: There were only four Members of the United States Senate who voted to authorize the use of force and then voted against funding our troops in harm's way—only four members—two of whom were my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. You might remember his famous quote when they asked him about his vote, he said, "I actually did vote for the $87 billion, right before I voted against it."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Sunday was the one-year anniversary of Senator Kerry's vote against funding for our troops. My opponent's many and conflicting positions on this issue are a case study into why his contradictions call into question his credibility and his ability to lead our Nation.

September of 2003, as the $87 billion funding package was being debated in Congress, he said on national TV, "It would be irresponsible to abandon our troops by voting against it"—his words. And yet one month later, he did exactly that irresponsible thing. He voted against the funding. And so we say, why? What happened to change the Senator's mind so abruptly in one month? Well, his opponent in the Democrat primary, Howard Dean, was gaining ground as an antiwar candidate. Senator Kerry apparently decided supporting the troops, even while in harm's way, was not as important as shoring up his own political position.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. At a time of a great threat to our country, at a time of great challenge in the world, the Commander in Chief must stand on principle, not on the shifting sands of political convenience.

We have big differences when it comes to how to protect America. You might remember in one of the debates Senator Kerry proposed that we must pass a "global test" before we defend ourselves.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I didn't make that up. I was standing right there. I heard him. [*Laughter*] The problem with the "global test" is that the Senator can never pass it. And that's dangerous in the world in which we live. I say he can't because remember 1990; the United Nations Security Council

passed a resolution supporting action to remove Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. The international community was united. Countries throughout the world joined the coalition. And yet even after United Nations approval, Senator Kerry voted against the authorization for the use of force. He says removing Saddam Hussein was a "mistake," during one of the debates.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He said—well, here's how he would have solved the problem. He would have asked the United Nations to pass another United Nations Security Council resolution.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Precisely what Saddam Hussein wanted to hear, another resolution. Had the Senator had his way; Saddam Hussein not only would be sitting in a palace; he would have occupied Kuwait. And the world would be dangerous for it. America is better off with Saddam Hussein sitting in a prison cell.

I'll work to build alliances. We'll work to make sure our coalition remains strong. But I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

I believe in the transformational power of liberty. I'll tell you what I mean by that. One of our friends in the international community is the Prime Minister of Japan, Koizumi. I saw him at the United Nations and said, "You know, I'm talking about you everywhere you go across the country." I said, "I hope you don't mind." He said, "No." I didn't tell him I was going to tell you, though, that his favorite singer was Elvis. [*Laughter*] Shows we're getting to know each other quite well. Doesn't seem like much, does it, that the head of Japan is a friend. But think about the history. Wasn't all that long ago, 60 years ago, that we were at war with the Japanese. Perhaps some here in the crowd was in that war. My dad—our dad was fighting the Japanese. I guarantee you people had relatives fighting the Japanese who are here. They were the sworn enemy of the United States of America.

After we won that war, Harry S. Truman, President of the United States, along with other Americans, believed in the power of liberty to transform an enemy into an ally. And there was a lot of skepticism about that. You can imagine why. "Japan conceivably becoming a democracy," people would ask. "Why do we worry about an enemy that has upset so many families in America?" But people believed, and as a result of people having firm belief, I sit down now at the table with the Prime Minister of Japan, talking about the peace we all want.

Someday, an American President will be sitting down with the duly elected leader of Iraq, talking about keeping the peace in the Middle East, and our children and our grandchildren will be better off for it.

I believe that millions in the Middle East plead in silence for their freedom. I believe women in the Middle East want to live in a free society. I believe the mothers and the fathers of the Middle East want to bring their children up in a free and peaceful world. I believe all these things, because freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This is not one of those times. This is a time that requires firm resolve, clear vision, and a deep faith in the values that makes this a great nation.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I will never forget. I will never forget the voices of those in hardhats yelling at me at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." I will never forget the look in the man's eyes as he grabbed me by the arm, and he said, "Do not let me down." Ever since that day, I wake up every morning thinking about how to better protect our country. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

Four years ago, when I traveled your great State, 4 years ago, when I came to The Villages, for that matter, I made this pledge, that if you gave me a chance to serve, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office to which I had been elected. With your help, I will do so for 4 more years.

God bless. Thanks for coming. Thank you all. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:25 p.m. at the Lake Sumter Landing Market Square. In his remarks, he referred to Florida State Representative Carey Baker and his wife, Lori; Mel R. Martinez, senatorial candidate in Florida; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Statement on the Anniversary of the Allied Landing on Leyte Island

October 19, 2004

On October 20, we commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Allied landing on Leyte Island's shores, a pivotal moment in the history of the War in the Pacific and in the human struggle for liberty. The Leyte landing is a central event in the long history of friendship between the peoples of the Philippines and the United States.

This year we are privileged that American, Filipino, and Australian veterans once again stand on the very beach where they fought for the liberation of the Philippines six decades ago. Many of those brave Allied soldiers made the ultimate sacrifice on these shores in the cause of freedom. MacArthur, Osmena, Romulo, and all those heroes commemorated in bronze on Leyte's shores were tenacious and brave.

Veterans of the Leyte landing: Know that we will continue to recognize this date as a day to draw renewed inspiration from your courage and sacrifice in the cause of freedom. We will pass on to our children what your great generation has passed to us, a world where liberty is the right of all humankind, and where men and women will remain vigilant in its defense.

Notice—Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Significant Narcotics Traffickers Centered in Colombia

October 19, 2004

On October 21, 1995, by Executive Order 12978, the President declared a national emergency pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States constituted by the actions of significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia, and the extreme level of violence, corruption, and harm such actions cause in the United States and abroad.

The order blocks all property and interests in property that are in the United States or within the possession or control of United States persons or foreign persons listed in an annex to the order, as well as of foreign persons determined to play a significant role in international narcotics trafficking centered in Colombia. The order similarly blocks all property and interests in property of foreign persons determined to materially assist in, or provide financial or technological support for or goods or services in support of, the narcotics trafficking activities of persons designated in or pursuant to the order, or persons determined to be owned or controlled by, or to act for or on behalf of, persons designated in or pursuant to the order. The order also prohibits any transaction or dealing by United States persons or within the United States in such property or interests in property.

Because the actions of significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia continue to threaten the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States and to cause an extreme level of violence, corruption, and harm in the United States and abroad, the national emergency declared on October 21, 1995, and the measures adopted pursuant thereto to deal with that emergency, must continue in effect beyond October 21, 2004. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency with respect to significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia. This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

George W. Bush

The White House,
October 19, 2004.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 2:29 p.m., October 19, 2004]

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on October 20.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Significant Narcotics Traffickers Centered in Colombia

October 19, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1622(d), provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared with respect to significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia is to continue in effect beyond October 21, 2004, to the *Federal Register* for publication. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on October 20, 2003 (68 *Fed. Reg.* 60023).

The circumstances that led to the declaration on October 21, 1995, of a national emergency have not been resolved. The actions of significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States and to cause extreme violence, corruption, and harm in the United States and abroad. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain economic pressure on significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia by blocking their property or interests in property that are in the United States or within the possession or control of United States persons and by depriving them of access to U.S. commercial and financial markets.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks in Mason City, Iowa

October 20, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming. Thank you all for coming out to say hello. It is great to be in Mason City, Iowa. I appreciate the warm welcome. It's the home of fine corn, fine people, and fine music.

I'm here to ask for your help. We're less than 2 weeks away from voting time. And I'd like for you to get your friends and neighbors and remind them we have a duty in democracy to vote. And get them headed to the polls, and remind them, if they want a safer America and a stronger America and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

My only regret is that Laura is not traveling with me today.

Audience members. Aw-w-w!

The President. That is generally the reaction. [*Laughter*] "Why didn't you send her, and you stay at home?" [*Laughter*] She was a public school librarian when I met her for the second time. See, we were in the seventh grade together in San Jacinto Junior High in Midland, Texas. She became a public school librarian, and I met her again. I said, "Will you marry me?" She said, "Fine, just so long as I never have to give a speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay, you got a deal." Fortunately, she didn't hold me to that deal. She is giving a lot of speeches, and when she does the American people see a warm, compassionate, great First Lady. I am traveling in Iowa today to give you reasons why I think you ought to put me back into office, but perhaps the most important one of all is so that Laura is the First Lady for 4 more years.

This morning in the Oval Office, I met with our fine Vice President, Dick Cheney. I was there, of course, to discuss national security matters before we hit the campaign trail today. I'm proud of my Vice President. I admit to you, he does not have the waviest hair in the race. [*Laughter*] You'll be happy I didn't pick him because of his hairdo.

[*Laughter*] I picked him because of his judgment, his experience, and his ability to get the job done.

I am proud of your United States Congressman, Tom Latham. He is doing an excellent job. You're proud to call him Congressman. I'm proud to call him friend. And I appreciate his wife, Kathy, as well. She's a fine, fine lady.

I'm also proud to be working with your United States Senator, Charles Grassley. I told him when I saw him—I saw him the other day in Cedar Rapids. I took him aside, and I said, "Listen, the South Lawn at the White House has got a lot of grass." [*Laughter*] I'm proud to work with him, and with your help, I'll continue to work with him for 4 more years.

I want to thank the house majority leader, Chuck Gipp, who's with us. I want to thank all those who serve in State and local government.

I appreciate the mayor being here. I'm honored that the mayor is taking time out to be here. My only advice to the mayor is to pave the potholes. [*Laughter*] I appreciate your service, Mayor.

I want to thank all the grassroots activists. I thank you for what you have done and what you're going to do. Put up the signs. Get on the phone. Turn people out to vote. Talk to your friends and neighbors. Go to your community centers. Go to your coffee shops. Go to your houses of worship. Remind people we have a duty. With your help, we will carry Iowa and win a great victory in November.

Listen, in the last few years, the American people have come to know me. They know my blunt way of speaking. I got that from my mother. [*Laughter*] They know that sometimes I mangle the English language. I got that from my dad. [*Laughter*] Americans also know I tell you exactly what I'm going to do, and I keep my word.

When I came into office, the stock market had been in serious decline for 6 months. That had been an indication that our economy was sliding into a recession. To help families and to get this economy growing again, I pledged to reduce taxes. I kept my word. The results are clear. The recession was one of the shallowest in American history.

Over the last 3 years, our economy has grown at rates as fast as any in nearly 20 years. Today, the homeownership rate is at an alltime high in America. In the past 13 months, we've added more than 1.9 million new jobs. The unemployment rate in America is 5.4 percent, lower than the average rate of the 1970s, 1980s, and the 1990s. Farm income is up. The unemployment rate in Iowa is 4.5 percent. This economy is moving forward, and we're not going to go back to the days of tax and spend.

To keep this economy strong, we'll continue to stand with our farmers. I understand a good national economy depends on a good farm economy. I signed a good farm bill that's helping our farmers. We're phasing out the death tax to help our farmers keep their farms from generation to generation. We have extended contracts in the Conservation Reserve Program to help protect our wildlife, to help improve land, and to help our farm families. We're expanding broadband technology to make high-speed Internet access available to all Americans by 2007. We're opening up markets for Iowa farmers all across the world.

We are pursuing an energy strategy that encourages conservation, increased domestic production, and renewables like ethanol and biodiesel. When I campaigned in your State in 2000, I told the people of Iowa I support ethanol. I kept my word. To make sure jobs remain here, America must be the best place in the world to do business. That means less regulations on our job creators. That means we must do something about the frivolous lawsuits that make it hard for small-business owners to expand their companies. We will open up markets around the world. We will make sure that we're wise about how we spend your money. And to make sure this economy continues to grow, we must keep your taxes low.

Now, my opponent has his own history on the economy. [*Laughter*] In 20 years as a Senator from Massachusetts, he has built a record of a Senator from Massachusetts. [*Laughter*] He has voted to raise taxes 98 times.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I want to remind you, he voted to tax Social Security benefits.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He's been there for 20 years. That's about five tax increases every year. I'd call that a predictable pattern. I'd call that an indicator. He looked in the camera the other night with a straight face and said he's not going to raise taxes on anyone who earns less than $200,000. The problem with that is to keep that promise, he would have to break almost all of his other ones. He has proposed more than $2.2 trillion in new Federal spending. That's trillion with a "T." [*Laughter*] And so they asked him, "How are you going to pay for it?" He said, "Oh, I'll just tax the rich." Now, we've heard that before, haven't we?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. See, you can't raise enough money by raising the top two brackets to pay for $2.2 trillion of new spending. There is a gap between what he has promised and what he can deliver, and guess who usually has to fill that gap?

Audience members. We do!

The President. There's also something else wrong with taxing the rich. The rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason—[*laughter*]—to slip the tab and stick you with the bill. The good news is, we're not going to let him tax you; we're going to carry Iowa and win in November.

When I came into public office, too many of our public schools were passing children, grade to grade, year after year, without learning the basics. So I pledged to restore accountability to our schools and to end the soft bigotry of low expectations. I kept my word. The No Child Left Behind Act is a solid piece of reform. We're now seeing results. Our children are making sustained gains in reading and math. We're closing achievement gaps all across our country, and we're not going to go back to the days of low expectations and mediocrity in our classrooms.

When I came into office, we had a problem in Medicare. Medicine was changing, but Medicare was not. And that was a problem. Let me give you an example. Medicare would pay tens of thousands of dollars for heart surgery but not one dime for the prescription drug that could prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. That was not fair to our seniors or our taxpayers. In 2002, I remember campaigning around your State saying that we were going to reform Medicare so rural hospitals would be treated more fairly in the State of Iowa. I kept my pledge. I kept my word. Iowa's rural hospitals are being treated fairly. Thanks to the good work of Senator Chuck Grassley and Congressman Tom Latham, beginning in 2006, all seniors will be able to get prescription drug coverage under Medicare.

There's more to do in health care. We need to make sure health care is available and affordable for all our citizens. We need a safety net for those with the greatest needs. We'll do more to make sure our poor children are fully subscribed in our programs for low-income families so they get the health care they need. I believe in community health centers, places where the poor and the indigent can get health care. Since I took office, we have opened or expanded more than 600 community health centers. We've provided care to more than 3 million patients, including many from farm communities. In a new term, we'll open or expand another 600 centers, and we will make sure every poor county in America has a community or rural health center.

Most of the uninsured today work for small businesses. Small businesses are having trouble affording health care. To help workers get the health care they need, we must allow small businesses to join together so they can buy insurance at the same discounts that big companies can buy insurance. We will expand health savings accounts so workers and small businesses are able to pay lower premiums, and people can save tax-free in a health care account they call their own.

To make sure health care is available and affordable, we must do something about the junk lawsuits that are running up the cost of medicine and running good doctors out of practice. By forcing doctors to practice defensive medicine, these medical lawsuits cost the Federal Government $28 billion a year. That means they cost you $28 billion a year. Lawsuits drive up insurance premiums, which drives good doctors out of practice. I've talked to too many ob-gyns, for example,

who are having to leave their practice because of lawsuits. And I've met too many women who are worried about the quality of the health care they receive because of lawsuits. You cannot be pro-doctor and pro-patient and pro-trial-lawyer at the same time. I think you have to choose. My opponent made his choice, and he put a personal injury trail lawyer on the ticket.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I made my choice. I'm standing with the docs and the patients. I'm for medical liability reform—now.

We have big differences in this campaign when it comes to health care. My opponent has laid out one that calls for a bigger and more intrusive Government. Now, the other day, in the debate, he looked right in the camera again, and he said this, he said, "The Government has nothing to do with it." I could barely contain myself. [*Laughter*] The facts are that 8 out of 10 people who get health care under Senator Kerry's plan would be placed on a Government program. Those are the facts.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He said his plan would help small businesses, yet upon analysis, small-business groups have concluded that it is an overpriced albatross that would saddle small businesses with 225 new mandates. I want to help our small businesses and will through association health plans, but we're not going to saddle them with a bunch of new Government regulations. My opponent wants to move in the direction of Government health care. Health decisions, in my plan, will be made by doctors and patients, not by officials in Washington, DC. He can run from his plan, but he cannot hide.

We'll continue to promote an ownership society in America. You know, there's a saying that says no one ever washes a rental car. [*Laughter*] There's a lot of wisdom in that statement. See, when you own something, you care about it. And when you own something, you have a vital stake in the future of our country. That's why we will continue to promote entrepreneurship. Every time a small business is started, someone is achieving the American Dream.

That's why we're encouraging health savings accounts, so people can have the security of managing and owning their own health care account. That's why we'll continue to promote homeownership in America. I love it when more and more people open up the door where they live and say, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property."

In a new term, we'll take the next step to build an ownership society by strengthening Social Security. Now, I want to take you back to the 2000 campaign, if I might, when they ran all those ads that said, "If George W. gets elected, you will not get your check." You remember those? I want you to remind your friends and neighbors that they got their Social Security checks. No one is going to take the Social Security check away from our seniors. And as far as the baby boomers like me go, we're in pretty good shape when it comes to Social Security.

But we need to worry about our children and our grandchildren when it comes to the Social Security system. We need to worry about whether or not Social Security will be around when they need it. I believe we need to think differently about Social Security for our youngsters. For their sake, we must strengthen the system by allowing younger workers to save some of their own payroll accounts—payroll taxes in a personal savings account that they can call their own, that the Government cannot take away.

The other night, my opponent said he's going to maintain the status quo when it comes to Social Security. That is unacceptable. The job of a President is to confront problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations.

We have a different philosophy of Government. On just about every issue, my opponent is for more authority to the United States Government. I'm for more authority to the people. On issue after issue, from Medicare without choices to schools with less accountability to higher taxes, he takes the side of bigger Government.

And there's a word for that attitude. It is called liberalism. Now, he just dismisses that word as a label. He must have seen it differently when he told a newspaper, "I am liberal and proud of it." [*Laughter*] There have been people who have judged people's records in politics—the nonpartisan National

Journal Magazine did a study and named him the most liberal Member of the United States Senate. That takes hard work. [*Laughter*] See, he can run, but he cannot hide.

I have a different record and a different philosophy. I do not believe in big Government, and I do not believe Government should be indifferent. I'm a compassionate conservative. I believe in policies that empower people to improve their lives, not try to run their lives. So we're helping men and women find the skills and tools to prosper in a time of change. We're helping people realize their dreams so they can find dignity and independence in America, and that is how I will continue to lead our country for 4 more years.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. In a time of change—in this time of change, some things do not change, the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. In a time of change, we must support the institutions that give our lives direction and purpose, our families, our schools, our houses of worship. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every being counts. We stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. We stand for the second amendment, which protects every American's individual right to bear arms. We stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

My opponent's words on these issues are a little muddy, but his record is plenty clear. [*Laughter*] He says he supports the institution of marriage, but he voted against the Defense of Marriage Act. He says he's—he called himself the candidate with conservative values, but he voted against the ban on the brutal practice of partial-birth abortion.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He described the Reagan years as a time of moral darkness.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. There is a mainstream in American politics, and my opponent sits on the far left bank. In this campaign, he can try to run from his record and his philosophy, but he cannot hide.

This election will also determine how America responds to the continuing danger of terrorism. The most solemn duty of the American President is to protect the American people. If America shows uncertainty or weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

Since that terrible morning of September the 11th, 2001, we've fought the terrorists across the Earth, not for pride, not for power, but because the lives of our citizens are at stake. Our strategy is clear. We're reforming and strengthening our intelligence gathering capabilities. We're defending the homeland. We're transforming our military. The All-Volunteer Army will remain an all-volunteer army. We're staying on the offensive. We will strike the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. We will spread freedom and liberty. And we will prevail.

Our strategy is succeeding. Think about the world the way it was some 3½ years ago. Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida. It's where terrorists were training to inflict great harm on America and the free world. Pakistan was a transit point for terrorist groups. Saudi Arabia was fertile ground for terrorist fundraising. Libya was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons. Iraq was a dangerous place and a gathering threat. And Al Qaida was largely unchallenged as it planned horrific attacks.

But because we acted, because the United States of America was steadfast and resolved, Afghanistan is now a free nation and an ally in the war on terror; Pakistan is capturing terrorist leaders; Saudi Arabia is making raids and arrests; the army of a free Iraq is fighting for freedom; and more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members and associates have been brought to justice.

Now we're standing with the people of Afghanistan and Iraq. When America gives its word, America must keep its word. But I want the youngsters here to hear what is happening in the world in which you live. Think about Afghanistan 3½ years ago. There were young girls there who couldn't go to school, and their mothers were pulled in the public square and whipped if they didn't toe the line of these ideologues of hate who ran the

country. They were called the Taliban. These were barbaric, brutal people.

Because we acted in our own self-interest, because we upheld the doctrine that said, "If you harbor a terrorist, you're equally as guilty as the terrorist," today, Afghanistan is free. Millions of people voted in a Presidential election. The first voter in the Afghan Presidential election was a 19-year-old woman. Freedom is on the march. People want to be free. That's what you've got to know. People desire to be free.

In Iraq, there will be elections in January. Think how far that society has come from the days of torture chambers, the days of a brutal dictator who was willing to cut the hands off people arbitrarily. Think about the difference that is from the days of the mass graves. See, free societies help us keep the peace. Free societies will be hopeful societies which no longer feed resentments and breed violence for exports. Free countries will join us in fighting these ideologues of hate instead of supporting them. And that helps us keep the peace we all long for.

And so our mission is clear. We will help train police and armies in Afghanistan and Iraq so people in those countries can do the hard work of defending their own freedom. We will get those countries on the path to stability and democracy as quickly as possible, and then our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

It is such an honor to be the Commander in Chief of such a great military. And it is a great military because of the character of the people who wear our Nation's uniform. And I want to thank the veterans who are here today for having set such a great example.

And I want to thank the military families who are here. And I want you to know that we will keep our commitment to those who wear the uniform and their families by making sure that our troops have all they need to complete their missions. That's why I went to the United States Congress in September of 2003 and asked for $87 billion in supplemental funding to support our troops in harm's way, in both Iraq and Afghanistan. I was very pleased with the overwhelming bipartisan support for that important funding request. As a matter of fact, the support was so strong that only 12 Members of the United States Senate voted against the funding to support our troops in combat, 2 of whom were my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Now, let me remind you of a startling statistic, and I want you to remind your friends and neighbors of this startling statistic. There were only 4 Members of the United States Senate—4 out of 100—who voted to authorize the use of force and then voted against the funding to support our troops in combat. Two of those four were my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. So I asked him why. I asked him about that vote. And that's when he said, "I actually did vote for the $87 billion, before I voted against it." Now, I don't know if a lot of folks around the coffee shops in this part of the world talk like that. [*Laughter*] I doubt they do. They continued to press him. He's given them a bunch of answers as to why he made that vote. One of the most interesting ones of all is he finally just said, "It was a complicated matter." [*Laughter*] There's nothing complicated about supporting our troops in combat.

This is America's first Presidential election since September the 11th, 2001. The security of our country is at risk in ways different from any we have before faced. We are in the midst of a global war against a well-trained, highly motivated enemy, an enemy who hates America for the very freedoms and values we cherish most. The next Commander in Chief must lead us to victory in this war, and you cannot lead a war when you don't believe you're fighting one.

Senator Kerry was recently asked how September the 11th had changed him. He replied, "It didn't change me much at all." And this unchanged world view becomes obvious when he calls the war against terror primarily an intelligence and law enforcement operation, rather than what I believe, a war which requires the full use of American power to keep us secure.

Senator Kerry's top foreign policy adviser has questioned whether this is even a war at all. Here's what he said, and I quote, "We're not in a war on terror in the literal sense. It is like saying 'the war on poverty.'

It is just a metaphor." End quote. Confusing food programs with terrorist killings reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of the war we face, and that is very dangerous thinking.

My opponent also misunderstands our battle against insurgents and terrorists in Iraq, calling Iraq a "diversion" from the war on terror. The case of one terrorist shows how wrong his thinking is. The terrorist leader we face in Iraq today, the one responsible for planting car bombs and beheading Americans, is a man named Zarqawi. Zarqawi ran a terrorist training camp in Afghanistan until our military coalition destroyed that camp. He then fled to Iraq, where he got medical treatment and continued his plotting and planning. To confirm where he's coming from, just the other day, Zarqawi publicly announced his sworn allegiance to Usama bin Laden.

If Zarqawi and his associates were not busy fighting American forces in Iraq, does Senator Kerry think he would be leading a productive and peaceful life? Of course not. And that's why Iraq is no "diversion" but a central commitment in the war on terror, a place where our military is confronting and defeating terrorists overseas so we do not have to face them here at home.

You cannot lead our Nation to decisive victory, on which the security of every American family depends, if you do not see the true dangers of a post-September the 11th world. The war against terror requires all our resources, all our strength. We will stay on the offense. We will improve our homeland protections. And of course, we'll continue to work with our allies and our coalition to keep us safe.

Senator Kerry's view of alliance-building is to call them "the coerced and the bribed," is to insult the friends who stands with us and try to placate countries who disagree with us. No, we'll work hard with all our friends and allies, but I will never give a country a veto power over our national security.

I believe in the transformational power of liberty. That's what I believe. You know, I have had many conversations with Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan. That may not seem like much to some here. But it wasn't all that long ago, when you think about it, that we were at war with Japan. Japan was the sworn enemy of the United States of America. My dad fought against the Japanese. I'm confident many out here's relatives fought against the Japanese as well. And after we won that war, Harry S. Truman, President of the United States, believed in the power of liberty to transform an enemy into an ally.

There was a lot of skepticism about that during that period in our history. You can understand why. "Japan couldn't conceivably become a democracy," people would say. "Why do we want to help a country that inflicted such harm on the United States of America," others would say. There was pessimism and doubt.

But fortunately, predecessors of ours believed in the power of liberty to transform, and as a result of that belief and because we helped Japan become a democracy, I now sit at the table with Prime Minister Koizumi, talking about how to keep the peace we all want.

Someday, an American President will be sitting down the a duly elected leader of Iraq, talking about keeping the peace in the Middle East. And our children and our grandchildren will be better off for it.

I believe that millions in the Middle East plead in silence for their freedom. I believe women in the Middle East want to live in a free society. I believe mothers and dads in the Middle East want to raise their children in a free and peaceful environment. I believe all these things because freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

We have climbed the mountain, and we see the valley below. And the valley below is one of peace and hope and optimism. You know, for all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. [*Laughter*] This is a time that requires firm resolve, clear vision, and a deep faith in the values that makes us a great nation.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. I will never forget the

day. I will never forget the voices of those in their hardhats yelling at me at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." I will never forget the look in the man's eye who grabbed me by the arm, and he said, "Do not let me down." Ever since that day, I wake up every morning thinking about how to better protect our country. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

Four years ago, when I traveled your great State in the caucuses and then in the general election, I made a pledge that if you gave me a chance to serve, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office to which I had been elected. With your help, with your hard work coming down the stretch, I will do so for 4 more years.

God bless. Thank you all for coming. I appreciate you being here. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. at the North Iowa Fairgrounds. In his remarks, he referred to Chuck Gipp, majority leader, Iowa House of Representatives; Mayor Jean Marinos of Mason City, IA; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Remarks in a Discussion in Rochester, Minnesota

October 20, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming. Thank you all. Please be seated. I might just decide to take off my jacket. We've got some work to do.

As you can see, I'm joined on the platform here with some of your fellow citizens. We're going to talk about economic policy and ownership and ways to make America a more hopeful place. And we'll be having a dialog here in a minute, but I've got something I want to tell you first.

I'd like your help in this election. We're coming down the stretch, and I'm here to ask for your help in turning out the vote. Get your friends and neighbors to go to the polls. We have a duty in this country to participate in our democratic system by voting. And get them going to the polls, and when you get them headed there, remind them that if they want a safer America and a stronger America and a better America, put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

It is nice to be back in Rochester, and it's great to be back in the great State of Minnesota. And there is no doubt, with your help, we will carry Minnesota and win a great victory on November the 2d.

Laura said for me to send her best. I'm sorry she's not here. You know, when I—we went to the seventh grade together at San Jacinto Junior High in Midland, Texas. And then we got to know each other again later on, and she was a public school librarian. And I asked her to marry me, of course, and she said, "Fine, but never make me give a political speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay, if that's one of the conditions, you got a deal." Fortunately, she didn't hold me to that promise. She's giving a lot of speeches, and when she does, the American people see a strong, compassionate, warm, great First Lady. I love her dearly. We are enjoying ourselves on this campaign. It's really a lot of fun to travel with her, and it's really a lot of fun to travel with our daughters, Barbara and Jenna. They're now out campaigning. You know, I told them when they were kids, "We'll go on the great family camping trip." This is it. [*Laughter*]

I'm proud to be here with your United States Senator, Norm Coleman. I appreciate you, Senator. He's a good man. I enjoy working with him. He represents Minnesota in fine fashion. And I'm also proud to be here with Gil Gutknecht, the United States Congressman for this area, and Mary—where is Mary? Oh, hi, Mary, good to see you again. Thanks for coming.

I want to thank—the Governor is not with us. He's doing a great job, though. I appreciate Tim. I enjoy him. I like him. I trust him, and so should you. He's doing you a good job. I'm sure he's out working a phone bank, turning out that vote. I want to thank all the local and State officials who are here.

I really want to thank the grassroots activists. You never get thanked enough for putting up the signs, for making the phone calls, for doing all the hard work. I know how hard you are working. I want to thank you in advance for the great victory we're going to have here in the State of Minnesota.

I met Sister Chabanel Hayunga today. Where are you, Sister? I know she's—you got a terrible seat. [*Laughter*] You would have thought a soldier in the army of compassion would have gotten a better seat. I'm going to talk to the advance person here. [*Laughter*] The reason I bring her up is because she is active with the Senior Companion Program through Catholic Charities.

The strength of this country is the hearts and souls of our citizens. That is the strength of America. We've got a great military, and we'll keep it strong. We've got a world-class economy that's growing. We'll keep it strong. But the true strength of this society of ours is the fact that there are millions among us who love a neighbor just like they'd like to be loved themselves. America can change and will change, one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time, because of the deep compassion of people like the Sister. She, of course, says—typical of a true soldier in the army of compassion—out here on the runway when we had our picture taken at Air Force One, she said, "I am here representing the thousands of people in Minnesota who volunteer to make society a better place."

You have set such a clear example, for which we are grateful. Thank you, Sister, for what you do.

The President's job is to solve problems. We had a serious problem when it came to our economy. The stock market had been in significant decline 6 months prior to my arrival—I want you to remind your friends and neighbors of that—which foretold a recession that took place. And then we had some corporate scandals which affected our economy. We passed tough laws that made it clear to people we will not tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America. That ought to be now abundantly clear. And then we got attacked, and those attacks cost our economy one million jobs in the weeks after September the 11th.

But we acted. I led; the Congress responded with tax relief. And the tax relief was vital. The tax relief encouraged consumption. It encouraged investment. And the recession was one of the shallowest in American history.

And the facts are clear. When you get through all the political noise, the facts are clear. Our economy is growing at rates as fast as any in nearly 20 years. We've added 1.9 million new jobs since August of 2003. The national unemployment rate is 5.4 percent, which is lower than the average rate of the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s. Your unemployment rate in Minnesota is 4.5 percent. The farm income is up. Homeownership is at an alltime high. We're moving forward. We have overcome problems. There's more work to be done, but think about where we have been and where we're going. And we're not going to go back to the days of tax and spend. We're not going to go back to the days of the policies that stifle the entrepreneurial spirit.

So the fundamental question in this campaign, after I've shown people I can lead and solve problems is, what else are we going to do? I'll tell you what else we're going to do. We're going the make sure we get an energy policy to my desk. I proposed a plan over 2 years ago that encourages conservation, that uses renewables like ethanol and biodiesel, that uses technologies for clean coal technology, that says we can explore for environmentally friendly ways for natural gas, a plan that recognizes we must become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

In order to make sure this economy grows, we've got to keep opening up markets for Minnesota farmers and entrepreneurs and small-business owners. See, the tendency in American politics is to fall prey to economic isolationism. That would be bad for our workers. It would be bad for our consumers. The Presidents before me have opened up our markets, and I'm happy to open up markets too. It's in our consumers' interests. If you have more products to choose from, you're likely to get that which you want at a better price and better quality. See, it's in your interests. And so I'm saying to places like China, "You treat us the way we treat you. You open up your markets just like we've opened up our markets." And I say that with confidence because we can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere, so long as the rules are fair.

And I want our soybean growers here in Minnesota to understand that one reason your prices are such that you can make a living is because you're selling soybeans to

China. See, they're using your soybeans. It's essential you have a President who understands what free trade means to people from all sectors of our economy.

I'll tell you what else we need to do to make sure jobs stay here in America and the entrepreneurial spirit is strong. We've got to do something about the regulations that plague our business and job creators and something about these frivolous lawsuits that are making it hard for small businesses to expand their businesses.

To keep jobs here, we've got to be wise about how we spend your money and keep your taxes low. And taxes are an issue in this campaign. See, I'm running against a fellow who has promised $2.2 trillion worth of new spending. That's a lot. That's with a "T." [*Laughter*] That's a lot even for a Senator from Massachusetts. [*Laughter*] So they asked him, "How are you going to pay for it? How are you going to pay for it?" He said, "Oh, we'll just tax the rich, raise the top two brackets." Let me tell you at least two things—three things wrong with that. First of all, you got to believe him that he's going to tax. You know, he's one of the first—one of the few Presidential candidates to ever promise raising taxes in a Presidential campaign, and that's a promise most politicians are happy to keep.

First of all, you can't pay for $2.2 trillion worth of new spending by raising the top two brackets. You fall short by about $800 billion. There's a gap between what is promised and what is deliverable. Actually, it's 1.4 trillion you fall short, beg your pardon, and so guess who usually gets to fill that gap between what is promised and what is capable of delivering? You do.

Secondly, when you're taxing the rich, you're taxing about 900,000 small-business owners. Most small businesses are Subchapter S corporations or limited partnerships. And they pay tax at the individual income-tax level, which means you're running up the taxes on the job creators. We're about to talk to somebody, you know, one of these people who are going to be affected by the top two brackets.

Thirdly, the rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason: to stick you with the tab. We're not going to let him tax you, because we're going to win Minnesota on November the 2d and carry this country.

Let me talk about a couple of other issues. I want to talk about health issues. This is a good place to talk about health. Mayo Clinic, one of the great clinics—we always want our country to be on the leading edge of change when it comes to providing good medicine for our people. My mother keeps telling me what to say when it comes to Mayo Clinic. [*Laughter*]

So there is a fundamental difference of philosophy in this campaign about health care. I believe health care ought to be a commonsense approach, not one that increases the scope and power of the Federal Government. We ought to be worried about a health care system that moves people from private care to federally controlled health care because what that will lead to is rationing, bad decisionmaking. It will take the consumer totally out of the equation. Other countries have tried centralized health care, and it has failed. And the health care systems have slowly but surely declined in the quality of health care.

I have a different—and make no mistake about it, my opponent's program does that. He actually—he said in the camera at one of our debates, he said, "My plan is not a Government plan." You know, I could barely contain myself. [*Laughter*] I understand the nature of his plan. When you increase Medicare—Medicaid availability, it provides an excuse for small-business owners to no longer provide insurance for their employees because the Government will pick it up. See, 8 out of 10 new people subscribed to health care under his plan would end up on Federal rolls. That is an increase in the role of the Federal Government.

Here's a different approach. One, we'll make sure health care is available. We'll take care of the poor and the indigent through community health centers. Every poor county in America ought to have a community health center, places where people can get good preventative and primary care. It is a good use of your money to make sure the poor and the indigent get good primary and preventative care. We'll make sure our programs for children in low-income families are fully subscribed to. But to make sure health

care is affordable—that's what we need to address, the cost of health care.

Part of the reason health care costs are high is because third-party payers make the payment. There is no market discipline. There is no real demand—focus on demand in health care. That's why I believe in health savings accounts, tax-free plans to allow the decisionmaker to be you, a plan you own, a plan you carry with you from job to job, a plan in which you're totally in charge of.

Secondly, health care costs are up because of lawsuits. Make no mistake about it, junk lawsuits against our doctors are running up the cost of your health care. They're making it hard for small businesses to be able to afford insurance, and they're running good doctors out of practice. You cannot be pro-doctor, pro-patient, and pro-trial-lawyer at the same time. You have to choose. You have to choose. My opponent made his choice, and he put a personal injury trial lawyer on the ticket. I made my choice. I am standing with our doctors and our patients. I support medical liability reform—now.

Two other ways to address the cost of health care: One is speed up generic drugs to the market. Plus, I support these Minnesota Congressman and Senator's idea of importation of drugs from Canada, so long as it's safe. We want you to take drugs that cure you, not harm you. I have a duty—it's easy for some in Congress to be calling for importation. I'm just going to make sure, before they come in, we know exactly what we're importing. You want to make sure that that which comes in from Canada is actually manufactured in Canada. You don't want to be buying something from a Third World country. And so we want to be safe. We want to make sure we do the right thing.

And fourthly, medicine, in all due respect, is like going back to the horse-and-buggy days when it comes to the use of information technology. I mean, you know, there's a lot of files that are handwritten still, and you can't even read a doctor's writing most of the time. [*Laughter*] So I believe in electronic medical records. I know we need to have a common language all across the medical field. They estimate that over 20 to 30 percent of the costs can be wrung out of the system with the proper use of information technology. This is an exciting new era available for medicine. You just need a President who understands how to address the root causes of costs going up. And that's how you avoid federalizing health care, and that's how you put in place commonsense policies that makes sure the decisions are always made by doctor and patient, not by officials in our Nation's Capital.

A couple of other points I want to make very quickly—kind of getting wound up here—[*laughter*]—you notice the temperature in the room is rising. [*Laughter*] One, education is vital to make sure that we have a hopeful America. The No Child Left Behind Act that we passed is a great piece of legislation. It challenges the soft bigotry of low expectations. It increases Federal spending but in return says, "Show us. Measure and let us know whether a child can read and write and add and subtract." And we've got to find that out early. We cannot have a system that just simply shuffles kids through the system and hope we get it right. We need to know if we're getting it right. You can't solve a problem unless you've diagnosed it, and now we're diagnosing problems early. We're providing extra money for at-risk students and students who need extra help.

And there's an achievement gap closing in America, and it's vital. You know how we know? We measure. We can determine whether a child can read. And reading scores are going up for kids that have generally been shuffled through the school system. And we're not going to go back to the days of mediocrity and low standards. We're making progress, and America is better off for it.

So we're going to talk about education today. See, one of the things we've got to do is make sure education is not only strong for our kids; we've got to make sure education is available for all our citizens, because in a changing world—and the world is changing—the jobs of the 21st century oftentimes require a new skill set. For those of you involved with medicine know exactly what I'm talking about. Medicine is changing, and there constantly needs to be an upgrading of skills. And a great place to do that and a wonderful way to make sure people have got the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the

21st century is through our community college system. I'm a big backer of the community college system, and we're going to talk to a community college student here today about what it means to go back to school.

One other thing I want to talk about right quick, and that is Social Security. A President must solve problems, must confront problems, not pass them on to future Presidents or future generations. We have a problem in Social Security, and that is, when baby boomers like me retire, younger workers are going to have trouble paying for us and, therefore, have money available when they retire. That's just the facts.

Now, first, I want to address kind of the typical old-style, stale politics, and that is the politics of scare tactics towards Social Security. When I ran in 2000, I suspect here in the State of Minnesota—I know in other States—they ran ads saying, "If George W. gets elected, the seniors will not get their checks." I want you to remind your friends and neighbors, the seniors got their checks. Nobody's going to take away the Social Security check from our seniors. The fund has got enough money, and baby boomers like me are in good shape.

But we need to worry about our children and our grandchildren when it comes to Social Security. Social Security will not be there when they need it if we don't think differently. That is why I believe younger workers ought to be able to take some of their payroll taxes and set up a personal savings account, a personal savings account that will earn a better rate of return than the current Social Security trust, an account they call their own, an account the Government cannot take away.

You know, I like to tell people that no one ever washes a rental car. [*Laughter*] There's wisdom in that. If you own something, you tend to wash it. If you own something, you have a vital stake in the future of our country. You know, one of the most heartwarming things about our society is when I hear people own something. They've started their own business, for example, or own their own home. We're going to talk to an owner right here, and that would be Jon Eckhoff.

Jon, thank you for coming. Please tell us the name of your company, and are you the owner? And if you're the owner, how did you end up owning it? [*Laughter*]

Jon Eckhoff. Thank you for the introduction. Thank you. I am the owner of Venture Computer Systems, along with three other people, two of which are in the audience. And how did it get started? Well, that could be a complex story, but let's just say that I came to Rochester 16 years ago to work for the Mayo Clinic, a dream job for a kid from Iowa. And it was a great job, but I was always restless. I always wanted to do something on my own. So in an unfinished corner of my basement, I put up a whiteboard, and I bought a computer, and I started meeting. Some of the people in this room probably were in my basement in the beginning of Venture Computer Systems.

The President. It's a classic, right, the old kitchen table, the garage, in this case, the basement. [*Laughter*] That's what happens. Don't you love to live in a country where old Jon says, you know, "I've got a dream. I want to start my own business"? The role of the Government is to create an environment.

What do you do? I mean, like, here's your chance to sell some products. [*Laughter*] It's a marketing opportunity.

Mr. Eckhoff. Let's take it. Well, Venture Computer Systems sells computers, network security products to businesses like the ones that people in this room own. In fact, I recognize many of my customers, and if you're not my customer, give me a call after the—[*laughter*].

The President. No wonder he's successful. He gets on the President's time and sells some products. [*Laughter*]

So, let me ask you something. How many employees you got?

Mr. Eckhoff. We have 30 employees in Venture Computer Systems.

The President. See, that's classic small business, isn't it? Thirty employees. Did you hire any this year?

Mr. Eckhoff. We're going to add three more before December 31st.

The President. Three more? For the year?

Mr. Eckhoff. For the year.

The President. Yes, see, that's what's happening all across America, by the way. When

the entrepreneurial spirit is strong, when people are upbeat about the future, they hire people. Do you realize 70 percent of new jobs in America are created by small businesses like Jon's—70 percent. The job creators in America are the small-business owners of America. So let me ask you something. How are you organized legally?

Mr. Eckhoff. Well, we're an S corporation.

The President. S corp. See, now let me explain what that means. That's legalese. I'm not even a lawyer. Anyway—but I do understand facts. If you're an S corporation, they pay tax at the individual income-tax level. So when you hear my opponent say, "Oh, we're just going to tax the rich"—that means anybody that's got income over $200,000 a year—I want you to remind your friends and neighbors he's talking about taxing job creators. It makes no sense to run up the taxes on somebody like Jon and his company as they're gaining steam, as they're hiring new people. If you take money out of his treasury, it's less likely he's going to hire somebody.

Let me ask you something—one other point I want to make. Part of good tax policy encourages good decisionmaking. And so part of the tax policy we had, we said, if you invest—in other words, if you purchase something—you're going to get a little tax break for small businesses.

Did you purchase anything?

Mr. Eckhoff. Yes, sir, we did. We purchased a variety of things. We used that money to buy a new truck. A lot of people have seen the Venture Computer Systems truck in the neighborhood.

The President. Always selling. Go ahead. [*Laughter*] Go ahead, what else did you buy?

[*Mr. Eckhoff made further remarks.*]

The President. What he's doing is he's buying equipment to make his workforce more productive. And when the workforce becomes more productive, A, it means the worker is going to make more money, and B, it means he's going to stay in business. See, a open market is one where you compete, and you're constantly trying to get better. It's in the consumer's interest that he gets better. It means he gives a better product. Tax policy encouraged him to make certain decisions. He said he bought a truck. Well, remember, somebody has to make the truck. And when somebody makes the truck, it means the decision he made means that somebody is more likely to keep a job.

The tax policy we passed not only helped in a large sense; the tax policy we passed made the entrepreneurial spirit shine even more brightly in America. And more and more people are starting their small businesses today, which is great for our country.

Michele Clements is with us. All right, Michele, what did you used to do?

Michele Clements. I was a full-time employee at a local electronics manufacturing plant here in Rochester. And in February of 2003, they laid us all off and sent our jobs overseas.

The President. Right. So this is the classic case of somebody being affected by jobs going overseas. The fundamental question is what does society do about it without harming our markets and our economy? What do you do about it? Well, the first thing you do about it is you make sure this is the best place in the world to do business. You make sure it's the best place for jobs to continue to grow here. You make sure Jon is optimistic so he continues to grow his jobs. But also, you've got to help people.

And so what happened?

Mrs. Clements. Well, after we found out we were losing our jobs, we—shortly after that we found out we qualified for retraining programs through the Dislocated Worker Program, if we wanted to go back to school to further our education and get back into the workforce.

The President. Right. Right. And so, like, you hadn't been in school for a while. I'm not going to ask you how long. [*Laughter*]

Mrs. Clements. It's been a while.

The President. It's been a while. You had a husband and two daughters, been a mom and everything, and you go back to school. Where?

Mrs. Clements. Right here at RCTC in Rochester.

The President. Yes, very good. So what was it like? I mean, I'm sure people are listening out there who wonder whether or not they could go back to school at this point in their life. Was it as tough as you thought?

Mrs. Clements. It was a big step.

The President. Yes.

Mrs. Clements. It was not easy to go back, but it was well worth it. I'm in the law enforcement program here at RCTC. Law enforcement was something that I always wanted to get into, but because of financial and family commitments, I wasn't able to do so. And if it wasn't for the funding I received through the retraining program——

The President. Trade adjustment assistance, retraining programs—listen, the Federal Government has got ample money to help people go back to school. [*Applause*] Don't clap for me; clap for her. She's the one who made the decision to go back to school. Yes, we can't pass a law that says somebody has got to want to improve themselves. But the role of Government is to say, "Here's an opportunity. Here's a chance."

And so, you're now doing something—you're being trained for something you've always wanted to do, law enforcement. Well, it's a noble profession. Thank you for doing it.

And secondly, what's interesting is, I asked her—kind of none of my business, but you know, anyway—I asked her anyway, "Are you going to make more money?"

Mrs. Clements. Yes, sir, hopefully at least 50 percent more than what I was making at the plant.

The President. Yes, listen to that. I want everybody to hear that. With a little education—in other words, improving skill sets, you make more money. By going back to a community college, with Government help, you become a more productive worker. And when you become a more productive worker, your wage goes up. And her wage went up.

Let me tell you something else interesting. You know, when we cut the taxes, we cut them for everybody who paid taxes. I was one—I'm a fellow who believes, if you pay taxes, you ought to get relief. We ought not to try to pick and choose winners when it comes to tax relief. But we also helped our families. We raised the child credit to $1,000 a child. We reduced the penalty on marriage. The code ought to encourage marriage, not discourage marriage.

And this family saved $1,700 a year in tax relief, see, and the fundamental question in this campaign is who can spend the $1,700 better, this family or the Government? I believe this family can spend their money better.

Good job. Thank you.

The homeownership rate in America is an alltime high. More and more people from all walks of life are owning their homes for the first time. And Jill Wooten is with us. She is a first-time homeowner. First of all, you work.

Jill Wooten. I work. I'm a teacher at Gage Elementary School—love it.

The President. Fabulous. Thank you for teaching. Husband, Jesse.

Mrs. Wooten. He's the cute guy in the front row right there. [*Laughter*]

The President. Having trouble finding one. Oh, there he is. [*Laughter*] I agree, yes. It's an election year—anyway. [*Laughter*] We just embarrassed Jesse——

Mrs. Wooten. I know. He's beet-red. Shouldn't I be the one red up here?

The President. No, you're doing great. So why did you all decide to buy a home?

[*Mrs. Wooten made further remarks.*]

The President. Isn't that wonderful to hear? You know, there's nothing better in a society, where more and more people open up the door where they live and say, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property." If you own something, you care a lot about a lot of things, like your future. That's why we want to have people own their own savings account—health savings account, so they can manage their health care, or own a piece of their retirement, if you're a younger American, or own your own business or own your own home. A hopeful America is one in which ownership is spread throughout all our society.

We've got good plans to help people own their home. By the way, this family will save $2,500 in 2004 on tax relief. You know, you hear this—it matters. The tax relief helps. It helps the American family be able to realize their dreams like owning their own home. And by the way, my opponent voted against every one of these tax reliefs that I talked about—voted no when American families were on the line, voted no when it came to

raising the child credit, voted no when it came to reducing the marriage penalty.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. There is a big difference in this campaign. Make no mistake about it. Make no mistake about it. There is a different philosophy, a different attitude. He trusts Government. I trust the people.

Good job. Really good job.

The platform wouldn't be complete without a farmer, Duane Alberts, Pine Shelter Farms.

Duane Alberts. That's correct.

The President. Good, yes. And you do what?

Mr. Alberts. Well, Mr. President, it's time to kill the death tax. I just want to start out that way.

The President. Well, he's got—the man's got an opinion. We've got it—it's on its way to extinction. Unfortunately, it pops back up. It's going to be an odd year in 2010. You can imagine people—I mean, it goes away in 2010; it pops back up in 2011. So people are going to have some weird choices in 2010 when it comes to the death tax, but never mind. [*Laughter*] It's a little morbid.

So why are you that concerned about it? Here's a farmer, a dairy farmer, got a lot of money tied up in inventory and land.

Mr. Alberts. That's correct. I farm in—I'm a fifth-generation farmer, a fifth-generation dairy farmer. Some of the sixth generation is sitting out here in the second row.

The President. Let me guess. Oh, yeah.

Mr. Alberts. I farm in partnership with my—in partnership with my father and my two brothers, and we milk 550 cows. Now, I used to have——

The President. By hand?

Mr. Alberts. Not anymore. Not anymore. [*Laughter*] You could ask my father about that, I suppose.

The President. Good. I just wanted to tell you there's a new kind of way to milk if you do.

Mr. Alberts. But we—but I used to have another partner. My uncle passed away 7 years ago, 7 years ago now. It's hard to believe it's been that long. But while my Uncle Myron was alive, he paid all the taxes, income taxes, Social Security taxes, payroll taxes, property taxes, sale taxes. He was loaded with taxes. And when he died, the estate tax bill came, and that came to $1,000 per cow.

The President. See, you can understand why people who farm the land or small-business owners that have got their assets—I mean, their money tied up in assets are worried about a tax that causes them to have to liquidate a herd to pay for it, I guess is what you're saying.

Mr. Alberts. That's right. That's right. It's hard to believe that a tax can be so huge, actually, that farmers, ranchers, and small-business men have to buy insurance to pay for it.

The President. Yes. And so what we've done is we've put the death tax on its way to extinction. But I'm telling you, it's coming back, unless you have the right President. I think we need to get rid of the death tax forever—once and for all.

People talk about simplifying the code. By the way, the Tax Code needs to be simplified. It's a complicated mess. A major portion of the Tax Code is the death tax. Once we get rid of that once and for all, it will help simplify the code. We need to do more work, don't get me wrong. But I want to thank you for sharing.

People have got to understand the death tax hurts our farmers, hurts our small-businessmen. People say we've got to protect the family farmer. You can't be a family farmer if you have to liquidate your farm in order to pay the death tax.

You got something else you want to say? Good job.

Mr. Alberts. I do want to stress that my uncle did his estate tax planning. He did everything right. He bought the insurance, but the annual premiums were $25,000 a year.

The President. Yes, see, when you get rid of the death tax, you don't have to worry about lawyers, and you don't have to worry about premiums and insurance. All you've got to worry about is who you want to leave your property to. And that is a fundamental American right. You ought to be able to leave your property to whoever you want to leave your property to. Thank you, sir.

I've got something else on my mind—two other things on my mind. I told you it's a changing world. Some things don't change,

the values we try to live by, courage, compassion, reverence, and integrity. Our basic beliefs don't change. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every being counts. We stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. And we stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

Let me talk about the security of our country right quick. Please be seated. This may take a little longer than you hope. [*Laughter*] The most solemn duty of the American President is to protect you, is to protect the American people. In this dangerous world—in this dangerous world, if our country shows uncertainty or weakness, this world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

I want to share with you some of the lessons of September the 11th. First, we face an enemy that has no conscience. They are coldblooded killers. They would just as soon kill in a schoolhouse as they would bomb the Twin Towers with our airplanes. Therefore, we can never negotiate with them. We can never hope for the best. We can never say, "Oh, gosh, well, maybe if we change our behavior, they'll change their ways." The only way to deal with them is to find them and bring them to justice before they hurt us again.

Secondly, we are fighting a different kind of war, but it is a—this war requires a complete strategy. Not only will we continue bringing Al Qaida and like terrorists to justice—and by the way, three-quarters of them have been brought to justice, and we're after the rest of them—but we also must make it clear to others that if you harbor a terrorist, you're just as guilty as the terrorist. And when the President says something, I think the President must speak clearly and mean what he says in order to keep the peace.

And so I meant what I said to the Taliban who were harboring Al Qaida. Remember, thousands of people had been trained in Afghanistan under the—with the consent of the Taliban. And so I said to the Taliban, "Get rid of Al Qaida. Join the community of free nations." They ignored our demand, and as a result of the brave actions of the United States military, the Taliban have been routed from power, Al Qaida training camps were destroyed, and 25 million people lived in a free society.

I want our youngsters here to think about what has happened over a course of 3½ years. Something amazing has taken place, truly amazing, in Afghanistan. You know, it wasn't all that young ago that young girls couldn't go to school. Two-and-a-half years is really nothing in the march of history, when you think about it. And their mothers were taken into the public squares and whipped if they didn't toe the ideological line of the Taliban, those ideologues of hate. Because we acted in our self-interest, because we upheld doctrine, the people of Afghanistan went to the polls to vote for a President. The first voter was a 19-year-old woman. Think about that.

There weren't a lot of people who believed 3½ years ago that Afghanistan would ever be free, but Afghanistan is free now. And it's in our interests that they are free. Not only did we uphold doctrine, but a free society is one that is now an ally in the war on terror. A free society sets such a hopeful example for others. Free societies do not export terror. Free societies help defeat the hopelessness that enables terrorists to breed. Free societies equal peaceful societies.

The second—the third lesson is that when we see a threat, we must deal with it before it fully materializes. Saddam Hussein was a threat. He was a threat because he hated America. He was a threat because he was shooting missiles at American airplanes. He was a threat because he harbored terrorists. He was a threat because he invaded his neighbors. He was a threat because he had used weapons of mass destruction. He was a threat.

Now, we didn't find the stockpiles we all thought were there. That includes me and my opponent. But we did realize that he was gaming the Oil for Food Programme to get the world to turn a blind eye, to continue to weaken the sanctions so he could reconstitute his weapons programs. And the danger America faces is the nexus of terrorist organizations and weapons of mass destruction. That's a danger. It is a threat.

We cannot hope for the best in this world—in the post-September the 11th world. We must deal with every threat. Military is always the last option. That's why I went to the United Nations. I was hopeful that diplomacy would work. But the 17th resolution failed just like the first 16 resolutions. We passed the resolution, but Saddam wasn't afraid of a resolution. He wasn't worried about the United Nations or the will of the free world, because the will didn't mean anything to him in the past. And so he ignored the demands. I have a choice to make: Do I trust a madman and forget the lessons of September the 11th, or take action to defend this country? Given that choice, I will defend America every time.

And now we're—Iraq is headed toward elections. Remember the skepticism about elections in Afghanistan? I do. Well, the same skepticism exists about Iraq. Can they ever be free? Do they ever want to vote? Of course they do. People want to be free. People love the idea of a free society. And so we're headed toward elections, and there are people there who are trying to stop them. Freedom is the greatest fear these terrorists have. That's why Zarqawi is fighting—Zarqawi who had been in Afghanistan, routed out of Afghanistan when his training camp was destroyed, comes to Baghdad, gets medical help in Baghdad, working with people in northern Iraq, prior to our arrival, on poisons and chemicals, and he's now fighting to stop the advance of freedom. He's a known killer.

And this is where my opponent and I disagree. He said, after September the 11th he wasn't fundamentally changed. I mean—and it reflects in his policies. He believes that this is a war only for intelligence and law enforcement. It is a limited point of view, which is a dangerous point of view in the world in which we live. He said that Iraq is a "diversion" from the war on terror. What does he think, Zarqawi has become a peaceful citizen? Does he think Zarqawi is going to change his ways? Zarqawi wants to destroy American life. Zarqawi was plotting and planning to attack us. It is essential we defeat Zarqawi there so we don't have to face the likes of him here at home.

You cannot win a war when you don't believe we're fighting a war, and that's the problem with my opponent's policies. They're limited in view, and that would lead to a danger for America. We must use every asset at our disposal. We must fully understand the nature of the enemy. We must take threats seriously before they materialize in order to do our duty to protect the American people. If we should uncertainty or weakness, this world will drift toward tragedy. And the American people can count on me to show no uncertainty or weakness in protecting you.

A couple of other points I want to make, and then we'll get out of here. When you have troops in harm's way, we have a duty to support them. That's why I went to the Congress and asked for $87 billion of supplemental funding to support our troops in combat, really important money. I want you to remind your friends and neighbors that there were only 4 United States Senators—4 out of 100—that voted to authorize the use of force and voted against supporting our troops in combat, 2 of whom were my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Voted to authorize force and wouldn't support the troops. People wonder why he made the vote. Well, I'll tell you why: Howard Dean was gaining in the Democrat primary. A Commander in Chief has got to stand on principle, not on the shifting sands of political convenience.

Audience member. Whoo!

The President. Undecided voter. [*Laughter*]

I want to share one other thing with you. I have a firm belief in the power of liberty to transform societies. At the heart of much of what I believe is this strong and unshakeable belief in the ability of freedom to change the world.

Let me share an experience with you that I've had over time as your President, and that is my relationship with the Prime Minister of Japan, Prime Minister Koizumi. He's a friend of Laura and mine, really interesting guy. I like him a lot. He's a lot of fun to be around. When I saw him at the United Nations, I said, "You know, I'm traveling our country talking about you. I hope you do not

mind." He said, "No, go ahead and talk about me." I didn't ask his permission to tell you Elvis was his favorite singer, though—but anyway. [*Laughter*]

And it probably doesn't sound too unusual to you that I would say that the Prime Minister of Japan is a friend, but think about our history, our recent history. Japan was the sworn enemy of the United States of America some 60 years ago. My dad fought against the Japanese. I suspect somebody in this crowd might have fought against the Japanese. I know somebody's relative fought against the Japanese. They were the sworn enemy of the United States of America, and it was a brutal war. All war is brutal, and we suffered a lot in that war. Families were disrupted. Loved ones were lost. Hearts were broken.

And after World War II, Harry S. Truman, one of my predecessors, believed that liberty could transform an enemy into an ally. And so he set policy to say we'll help Japan become a democracy.

Now, there were a lot of skeptics in America about that, and you can understand why, about that decision. "Why would you want to help an enemy," some probably said. "How could an enemy possibly become a peaceful, self-governing nation? These people can't be a democracy," others would say. There was enormous skepticism.

But my predecessor and others had belief. And as a result of believing that liberty could transform an enemy into an ally, I now sit down at the table with my friend Prime Minister Koizumi, talking about how to keep the peace we all want, talking about how to make this troubled world a more stable, peaceful place.

Someday, an American President will be sitting down with a duly elected leader from Iraq, and they will be talking about the peace in the Middle East, and our children and our grandchildren will be better off for it.

I believe people want to live in a free society. I believe women in the Middle East want to live in freedom. I know moms and dads want to raise their children in a free and peaceful world. I believe millions plead in silence for their liberty. And I believe this not because freedom is America's gift to the world; I believe this because freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

I'm running again because I want to make sure hope and opportunity spread throughout the land, through good economic policy, through encouraging ownership for all people in our society. I'm running again because I hold certain values dear that I think are important for this country. And I'm running again because I fully understand the risks we face, and I have a strategy to protect the American people.

We're going to win on November the 2d, with your help. May God bless you. May God bless our great country. Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:10 p.m. in the Rochester Aviation Hangar at Rochester International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Mary Gutknecht, wife of Representative Gil Gutknecht; Gov. Tim Pawlenty of Minnesota; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Remarks in a Discussion in Eau Claire, Wisconsin

October 20, 2004

The President. Thank you all. Please be seated. Listen, thanks for coming today. It's good to be back here in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. We're getting closer and closer to voting time. I'm here to ask for your help. I saw—somebody has been helping—I saw a lot of signs up coming in. I want to thank you for putting up the signs. I know some of you are making phone calls, reminding your fellow citizen to go to the polls. I need your help. And with your help, we will carry Wisconsin and win a great victory in November.

So today I'm here to talk about reasons why I think your fellow citizens ought to put me in office for 4 more years. We're going to talk about some issues, and we've got some fellow citizens up here to help talk about the plans and policies of my administration.

Perhaps the most important reason for you to put me back in for 4 more years is so that Laura will be the First Lady for 4 more years. She sends her best. She's doing great. She

was a public school librarian when I met her for the second time. The first time I ever met her, we were at San Jacinto Junior High, seventh grade, in Midland, Texas. The second time I met her, she was a public school librarian. She said, "Fine, I'll marry you, but you have to make me a promise." I said, "What's that?" She said, "I never want to have to give a speech." [*Laughter*] Well, fortunately, she didn't hold me to that promise. [*Laughter*] She is giving a lot of speeches, and when she does, the American people see a warm, compassionate, strong First Lady.

I'm proud of my runningmate, Dick Cheney. He's doing a great job.

And I'm proud of my Cabinet Secretary for Health and Human Services; that would be former Governor Tommy Thompson. He's doing a great job. I like to tell the people of Wisconsin, you did a fine job of training him. He's a good man.

I want to thank the Redetzkes for letting us come here today, Don and Diana. I'm proud you—these are some of the products they manufacture here. I said, "How is your business doing?" He said, "Just fine." He said, "We've added 30 employees this year. We're thinking about adding more." There's an optimism around. Our policies are working. And I want to thank the Redetzkes for letting us come and visit this important plant.

I want to thank Jack Voight, the State treasurer, for joining us today. Appreciate you being here, Mr. Treasurer. I want to thank Scott Walker from Milwaukee County. I'm proud Scott is here. I call him Scott W. I want to thank John Gard for joining us today. Speaker, where are you? Appreciate you, Speaker. Good to see you again. I've been in your State a lot, and he's been there all the time, for which I'm grateful.

I want to thank very much Dale Schultz for being here. He is a good man. I know him well. He will make a great Member of the United States Congress. And finally, Tim Michels. Good to see you, Tim—and Barbara. I know something about Barbaras. Thank you all for coming.

We've been through some challenges together in this country, really have been. And when you're out gathering up the vote, remind people about what this economy has been through. Six months prior to my arrival in Washington, the stock market was in serious decline, and that foretold a recession. And then we had some corporate scandals, and we passed tough laws, and we made it abundantly clear to people in this country that we will not tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America. We expect citizens to be responsible citizens.

And then we got attacked. We got attacked. And those attacks hurt us; they really did. And we responded to those attacks with good policy. We cut the taxes, and by cutting the taxes people had more money to spend and more money to invest. When you increase consumption and increase investment, the economy tends to grow. The recession we had was one of the shallowest in American history.

Our economy has been growing at rates as fast as any in nearly 20 years. We've added 1.9 million new jobs since August of 2003. The unemployment rate is at 5.4 percent. That's the national unemployment rate—lower than the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. And your unemployment rate in Wisconsin is 4.8 percent. Think about that. When people go to the polls, I want them to remember the people of this State are working because of good policy. Farm income is up. Homeownership rates are at an alltime high. We're moving forward. We've overcome these challenges, and we're not going to go back to the days of tax and spend.

A good economic policy means good farm policy. I told the people when I was running, I understand that we've got to have good agricultural policy in this country. And the agricultural sector of our country is doing fine, is doing well. Income is up. As a matter of fact, farm income is at a record high under my administration.

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. We're going to talk to some farmers up here, but dairy farm income is up. We're selling more and more of Wisconsin crops overseas. See, to make sure this economy continues to grow, we've got to continue to open up markets for U.S. products. It's easy to say we're going to shut down markets, but shutting down markets will hurt you. See, when you've got more products to choose from as a consumer, you're likely to get that which you want at a better price and

higher quality. That's how the market works. So shutting down our markets, which would hurt you—my policy is let's open up everybody else's markets. We can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere, so long as the playing field is level.

And farm exports are at an alltime high. We want to be using Wisconsin farm products to feed the world. If you're good at something, let's promote it, and we're really good at growing corn and soybeans.

I signed a good farm bill which is helping the agricultural sector, and part of the farm bill is the conservation title, which encourages farmers and landowners to set aside land for wildlife restoration, for land protection. We're going to talk about somebody who knows what he's talking about when it comes to good conservation policy. I tell everybody, "If you own the land, every day is Earth Day." If you make a living off the land, the best person to look after the land is the person making a living off of it, not some bureaucrat in Washington, DC.

Keeping jobs here means good energy policy. See, we've got to become less dependent on foreign sources of energy if we expect to keep this economy growing. And I submitted a plan to the United States Congress 2 years ago, and it's stuck, of course, because of politics. But it's a plan that encourages conservation. It's a plan that uses our technologies to be able to burn coal cleanly. It says we can explore for natural gas in environmentally friendly ways. But it also recognizes the valuable contribution that ethanol and biodiesel make to the energy mix here in America. Congress needs to pass that plan. We've got to become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

To make sure jobs stay here, we've got to have less regulations on the job creators. To make sure jobs stay here, we've got to do something about these lawsuits that are making it hard for the small businesses all across our country. You see, these lawsuits make it hard for a small business to expand. They're tending to having to fight these lawsuits off and not hiring people.

To keep jobs here, we've got to be wise about how we spend your money and keep your taxes low. Taxes are an issue. I'm running against a fellow who's promised $2.2 trillion in programs that cost—that's how much they cost the Government, 2.2 trillion. That's with a "T." That's a lot even for a Senator from Massachusetts. So they asked him how he was going to pay for it. He said, oh, he's just going to tax the rich, going to raise the top two brackets. Well, the only problem with that is it raises about 600 billion or 800 billion, depending on whose numbers you look at. In either case, it's far short of 2.2 trillion, so there's a gap. There's a gap between what he promised and how he's going to pay for it. Guess who usually fills that gap? Yes, you do. You understand how tax policy works.

Let me tell you what else is wrong with raising the top two brackets. We're going to talk to some small-business owners. Most small businesses are Subchapter S corporations, limited liability corps. They pay tax at the individual income-tax rate. So you hear him talking about running up the taxes, taxing the rich—they're taxing the job creators.

And the third thing wrong with it, the rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason: to slide the tab and stick you with it. We're not going to let him tax you; we're going to win Wisconsin and win on November the 2d.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you. Before we get to our guests here, I want to talk about a couple of other issues. We're in a changing world. Times are changing. And in a changing world, it helps to promote an ownership society in America to bring stability into people's lives. And I told you, homeownership rates are at an alltime high. We've got policies to continue to expand that. I can't tell you how it warms my heart to know more and more Americans from all walks of life are opening up the door where they live, saying, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property."

In order to make sure we're hopeful, we've got to promote ownership when it comes to health care accounts. See, health care is an issue in this campaign too. There is a fundamental divide.

My opponent is proposing bigger Government health care. Now, he looked in the TV cameras the other night and said no Government was involved. I could barely contain

myself. [*Laughter*] I looked at the fine print of his plan. Eight out of ten get signed up to a Government health care plan. See, if you raise the Medicaid limits to 300 percent, it provides incentives for small-business owners to stop providing insurance for their employees because the Government will pay for it. And so you're shifting people from the private sector to the public policy. And Government health care programs do not work. They may sound good, but they have failed in every country that has tried them. The quality of health care will decline. There will be rationing. If you end up as a line item in the Government budget, you can rest assured there will be Government controls over your health care.

I have a different point of view. We will take care of those who cannot help themselves through community and rural health centers. Those will be places where the poor and the indigent can get primary and preventative care. That's a good use of your taxpayers' money. It's best that people get care there and not in the emergency rooms of local hospitals. We will make sure that the program for children of low-income families is fully subscribed. That makes sense.

But to make sure health care is affordable, we ought to allow small businesses to pool risk, to join together so they can buy insurance at the same discounts that big businesses get to do.

To make sure health care is affordable, we will continue to expand health savings accounts, which will enable somebody to pay a low-premium, high-deductible major medical liability policy, coupled with a tax-free savings. These health care plans will reduce the cost of health care for the average citizen or the small business. They will be a health care plan in which the decisionmaker is the owner of the health care plan. They're a health care plan that you own, you control, and you can take with you from job to job throughout your entire life. This is a way to make sure health care is more affordable.

Also to make sure health care is more available and affordable, we've got to do something about the junk lawsuits that are running up the cost of medicine. See, I looked at the cost to the Federal Government on these lawsuits. Lawsuits cause doctors to have to practice defensive medicine. In other words, they're practicing medicine in anticipation of getting sued because there's so many suits, and that runs up the cost of health care. And the lawsuits run up the cost of premiums for docs, which run good docs out of business. I can't tell you the number of ob-gyns I've met who are anxious and upset by the fact that they, many times, cannot practice. And then you can imagine, if the ob-gyn can't practice, what it does to many pregnant women. It is stressful. It is not right. These lawsuits are a damage to our economy and to our society and to health care. You cannot be pro-doctor, pro-patient, and pro-personal-injury-lawyer at the same time. You have to choose. You have to choose. My opponent made his choice, and he put a personal injury lawyer on the ticket. I made my choice. I'm for medical liability reform—now.

Let me talk about one other form of ownership, and that's Social Security. See, the job of a President is to solve problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents or future generations. At least that's what I think it is. I think you come to Washington, DC—if you see a problem, you solve it as best as you can. Now, others have chosen a different attitude. They just say, "We'll pass it on and let somebody else take care of it." We have a problem with Social Security.

Now, I remember the 2000 campaign, particularly here in Wisconsin, when they told the seniors, "If old George W. gets in, you're not going to get your check." You might remember that aspect of the 2000 campaign. [*Laughter*] Well, I want you to remind your friends and neighbors of all political parties, George W. got in, and our seniors got their checks. And our seniors will continue to get their checks. The seniors have nothing to worry about when it comes to the Social Security check. Neither do baby boomers like me.

But our children and our grandchildren have got a problem because of the nature of the Social Security system. There will be more recipients than payers. More baby boomers like me retire with not enough people putting money into the system, and therefore, the system is going to be in trouble for our children and our grandchildren.

In order to make sure our children and grandchildren have got a retirement system that works when they need it, we ought to allow younger workers to set aside some of their own payroll taxes in a personal savings account they call their own, a personal savings account that will earn a better rate of return than the current Social Security trust, a personal savings account that the Federal Government can never take away.

My opponent says he's for the status quo in Social Security. I think it—I don't think that's leadership. We have a problem. In a new term, I'm going to bring Republicans and Democrats together and solve the problem.

In times of change, some things do not change—now, while I'm here, I got something else I want to say, and then I want to talk to our guests here. [*Laughter*] The values we try to live by don't change, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every being counts. [*Applause*] Thank you all. We stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. We stand for judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law. Go ahead and sit down.

And we stand for the second amendment to the United States Constitution, which gives every American individual the right to bear arms. And today I'm proud that Wayne LaPierre and Chris Cox from the National Rifle Association are with us. I appreciate you all coming. They have endorsed my candidacy for President of the United States, for which I'm grateful. I also am grateful for their gun safety programs as well as their understanding that the best way to protect the American people is to firmly prosecute those who commit crimes with guns, to hold them to account, and bring them to justice.

With us today is Bill Bruins. Bill, thank you for coming. What do you do to make a living? Or do you make a living? [*Laughter*]

Bill Bruins. You'd have to check with my bookkeeper, my wife.

The President. That's true. [*Laughter*]

[*Mr. Bruins made brief remarks.*]

The President. By the way, they set up their farm as a limited liability corporation, which means, under Senator Kerry's plan, he's going to get a tax increase. See, he's part of the—when they raise those top two brackets, if you've got income over $200,000 a year and you're a limited liability corp or a Subchapter S corp, you're taxed. I don't think it makes any sense to be taxing our farmers right now, as they're getting ready to make some money. I'd rather have him have the money so he can expand his farm.

How are you doing? Are you making a living?

Mr. Bruins. Yes, we are. It's been a good year. It's been a good year. Milk prices are strong. Beef prices are up. And it's just really exciting, the possibilities that we're looking at, given the climate that you've created here in Wisconsin.

The President. Well, thanks. We met back there. He asked about supporting the MILC Program. I do. I'm for the extension of the MILC Program, which would help the dairy farmers here in Wisconsin.

Mr. Bruins. Absolutely. That little program that you have endorsed and have endorsed extending has already put $413 million in the pockets of dairy farmers in the State of Wisconsin.

The President. That's good, yes. Glad to help out. What else are you concerned about? I can tell you what you're concerned about because you told me, but why don't you tell the people to make it look—[*laughter*].

Mr. Bruins. Well, because of your farm bill and the conservation provisions and the countercyclical payments that are provided with it, because of your lowering the taxes, and because of your continued commitment to making agriculture better, you have made a positive difference on agriculture in the State of Wisconsin. And as president of Wisconsin Farm Bureau, the largest farm organization in the State, I am endorsing you for a second term as President of the United States.

The President. Thank you very much. I accept. Thank you, I appreciate that. Thank you all. I was hoping that would come. [*Laughter*] I'm proud to get the Farm Bureau endorsement. It means a lot. It really

does. In a State where it's heavily agricultural, that's a big endorsement to get, and I'm proud to receive it. Thank you, sir.

Doug Mueller is with us. Welcome. And what do you do to make a living?

Doug Mueller. I milk cows twice a day. We have a family corporation.

The President. Hopefully not by hand. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Mueller. No, sir, not anymore.

The President. I would say there's some new technology that's come along. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Mueller. And I'm not old enough that I ever milked cows by hand when I was younger, either.

The President. You boys have got big hands, though, I'll tell you. [*Laughter*] What's on your mind? Tell me—tell the folks what's on your mind about——

Mr. Mueller. Well, I think the energy policy is one thing that really can be a benefit to agriculture and the entire economy. The use of more—more use of ethanol, biodiesel I think is great for farmers all over the country. And the use of the ethanol, cleaner emissions and everything, too, has got to be positive for the country.

The President. Yes, it is. See, it's interesting. What's happening is that we're spending money on research and development so that we can diversify away from old usage, old habits. We've got to get away from dependency upon crude oil coming in from overseas. And one way to do so is to better use ethanol and biodiesel. I mean, can you imagine someday a President sitting in the Oval Office, they come in and say, "On crops, we've got a great corn crop," and the first reaction is, "We're less dependent on foreign sources of energy." And so we're spending a lot of money on research and development to better use crops—soybeans, like biodiesel, as well as one of—in the State of the Union Address I talked about spending money to research—to develop a hydrogen-powered automobile.

I mean, technology is going to enable us to evolve away from our current energy usage. And one way to do so is through, as Doug mentioned, through the use of agricultural products. And there's more to learn, and there's more research to be done. And that's what we're promoting. But right now we're using ethanol in significant quantities, and it's helping our farmers.

What else?

Mr. Mueller. Thank you. And the death tax is an issue that is heavily on farmer and small-business owners' minds.

[*Mr. Mueller made further remarks.*]

The President. Let me talk about that right quick. It's an issue in this campaign. I suggested that the Members of the United States Senate vote to repeal the death tax forever. Of course, I couldn't get my opponent's vote. [*Laughter*] We got quite a few votes. As a matter of fact, we put the death tax on its way to extinction. The problem is it pops back up in 2011, which is going to make some interesting estate planning decisions at that point in time.

We need to get rid of the death tax totally. It's important for our small-business owners and our farmers and ranchers to get rid of the death tax forever, so a person can pass their farm on from one generation to the next without losing the farm. People talk about—if you got your assets tied up in land and inventory, in his case, cows and equipment, and you have to pay high death taxes, there's nothing to liquidate except for the farm itself, and that's unfair. I believe a person shouldn't be taxed twice, once during life and once after life. And I believe a person ought to be able to pass their assets on to whomever they want to pass it on to.

Thank you, Doug.

Mr. Mueller. Thank you.

The President. Lee Christenson is with us.

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. You got a fan base out there. [*Laughter*] I first got to know him because he tied some bass fishing flies for me. The flies did better than the fisherman. I was fishing, but I wasn't catching. [*Laughter*] He's got an interesting story to tell when it comes to preserving land.

Lee Christenson. I have a small family farm that I live on in rural Eleva, Wisconsin, just south of Eau Claire, and I took it over in 1994 from my parents. And I've converted that farm from a dairy farm into kind of a wildlife preserve, where I've utilized a lot of

the Government programs that you've helped us get going. The CRP program is just the greatest program in the world.

The President. Conservation Reserve Program.

Mr. Christenson. Yes, Conservation Reserve Program. And that program allows us to take the real highly erodible land, the steep lands that are marginal farmlands, and preserve them by putting them into trees, into prairie plantings, and into solid vegetative cover that keeps our streams a lot cleaner. And I've been able to get a WHIP, which is the Wildlife Habitat Improvement grant; EQUIP, which is the Environmental Quality Incentive Program grant through the Government; all sorts of assistance, technical assistance from the Fish and Wildlife Service. In fact, on our farm, we've taken the ditches, plugged the ditches, pulled all the tiles out of the prior converted farm fields that historically were wetlands at one time, and now we've created, just on our little farm, over 15 acres of wetlands.

So, you know, that's great that you do that, and we're able to turn the tides and create wetlands, instead of having lost them in the past.

The President. Yes, see, one of the—we used to have a policy of no new net loss—no net loss. How could you have a new net loss—no net loss of wetlands. I've now changed that policy to an increase in the number of wetlands all across the country to 3 million acres. Here's part of the way we're able to do so.

[*Mr. Christenson made further remarks.*]

The President. See, good environmental policy doesn't mean you have to be a lawyer in Washington, DC. Good environmental policy brings conservation groups together, brings hunting and fishing groups together, brings local community together, brings local environments into play, brings farmers into play. It's a collaborative effort, so we all work together to achieve national goals such as better air, cleaner water, and more wildlife preserve areas. And we're doing that. We're making very solid progress with a commonsense way of approaching environmental issues.

[*Mr. Christenson made further remarks.*]

The President. All right, I want to talk about one other thing. Thank you, sir. He doesn't hunt and fish all the time. You actually have a business.

Mr. Christenson. Yes, I forgot about that. [*Laughter*]

The President. What do you do?

Mr. Christenson. I have fun on the farm making wetlands and habitat and all that stuff, but I have to pay the bills. So I have a small Subchapter S corporation with about 50 employees, and we collect deer hides all across the United States and export them to China. So we, you know, we're bringing some money back to the United States. And with these great tax breaks that we've had in the last few years, we've been able to buy more semis, more forklifts. We've put a lot of good people to work. We've hired more people. And the interest rates—my gosh, just look at what the interest rates have been the last few years. They've really, really helped us by being able to expand our credit lines and do a lot of beneficial things for business.

The President. See, the tax policy we passed, I want you to remember what it was, which my opponent voted against every aspect of the tax policy. We raised the child credit to help people's families. We reduced the marriage penalty. We believe we ought to encourage marriage, not discourage marriage through the Tax Code.

We said, "If you pay tax, you ought to get relief," instead of trying to pick and choose winners in the Tax Code. But we also provided incentives for small businesses to invest. If you invest as a small business, there is a—there's a benefit. You heard him say he bought forklifts. Good tax policy encourages certain behavior, and one of the behaviors we're trying to encourage is for people to invest more and to spend money, to spend capital, because when he buys a forklift, somebody has got to make the forklift. When somebody is making the forklift, it means somebody is going to get work. That's how the economy works. It ripples throughout the economy.

He says he's a Subchapter S corporation. He's adding jobs. It is bad policy to tax the job creators. Do you realize 70 percent of new jobs in America are created by small

businesses just like this guy's? And my opponent, in order to pay for his promises, is, at the minimum, going to run up the taxes on about 900,000 Subchapter S and LLC corporations, going to tax the job creators. That is lousy economic policy.

Let me talk about one other aspect of this campaign in your life, and that is how to make sure we keep America secure. The most solemn responsibility of the American President is to protect the American people. If we show uncertainty or weakness in this decade, this world of ours will drift toward tragedy. That's not going to happen on my watch.

I understand the world in which we live. This is an important issue in this campaign. Let me tell you some of the lessons I have learned about the post-September the 11th world in which we live. The first lesson is, we face an enemy that is ruthless and has no conscience. They will kill just like that, whether it be in airplanes on the World Trade Center or in a schoolhouse in the Caucasus region of the world. That's what they'll do, and therefore, you cannot negotiate with these people. You cannot hope for the best with these people. You can't say, "Well, oh, gosh, we'll change the way we conduct foreign policy and hope they change their ways." The only way to deal with them is to find them and bring them to justice before they hurt us again.

Secondly, this is a different kind of war than we're used to, and therefore, it's important to think differently about how to protect the American people. One way to do so is to make it very clear that if a country harbors a terrorist, they're just as guilty as the terrorist. And when the President says something, it is important that the President speak clearly, so everybody understands, and mean what he says.

And I meant what I said to the Taliban in Afghanistan. See, they were the ones harboring Al Qaida. Thousands of people were trained there. It's kind of the classic case of the host and the parasite—the Al Qaida was the parasite, and the host was becoming weaker and weaker and—in the sense that Al Qaida had free will, doing what they wanted to do inside the country. There was no restrictions whatsoever. And they ignored our demands until the Taliban no longer is in power. We took them out of power, thanks to a great United States military.

I want the youngsters here to understand what has taken place. It's a phenomenal moment in history, phenomenal. See, it wasn't all that long ago—3½ years ago is hardly anything in the march of history—that the people in Afghanistan were living under a brutal reign of people whose vision is so dark and dim that it's hard for Americans to comprehend. And when you hear me talk about the ideologues of hate, I'm talking about the Taliban and the people like Al Qaida. Young girls were not allowed to go to school. See, that's their vision of the world. And if their moms didn't toe the line, they were taken into the public square and whipped, in some cases killed in the sports stadium. These people were grim.

But because we acted in our own self-interest, because we acted to uphold doctrine and make this world a safer place and to protect the American people, millions of Afghan citizens went to the polls to vote for a President of their country. The first voter was a 19-year-old woman at the polls. It's amazing. Because we acted in our self-interest, the poor people living in that country have been liberated from the clutches. They no longer live in darkness. They live in light, because freedom is on the march.

And that's important for our long-term security. It's important because free societies are peaceful societies. A free society will become an ally in the war on terror. A free society will set a incredibly hopeful example for others who long for freedom.

Thirdly, when we see a threat, we've got to deal with it. You know, we used to think oceans could protect us. We'd see a threat overseas, and if we didn't deal with it, it could be okay because it wouldn't come home to hurt us. That all changed on September the 11th.

I saw a threat with Saddam Hussein. I saw a threat because he was a sworn enemy of the United States. I saw a threat because we had been at war with him. I saw a threat because he invaded his neighborhood. I saw a threat because he was shooting missiles at our airplanes who were trying to enforce the

world's sanctions. I saw a threat—he paid suicide bombers; he harbored Abu Nidal and Abu Abbas. Terrorist Zarqawi was in and out of his country. I saw a threat because he had used weapons of mass destruction. Saddam Hussein was a threat.

The Congress looked at the same intelligence I looked at and concluded he was a threat. My opponent looked at the very same intelligence, the very same data, and concluded that Saddam Hussein was a threat and voted to authorize his removal. Now, before the President ever commits troops into harm's way—listen, I understand the consequences. To commit our troops is the last option for me. To put somebody in harm's way is the very last choice, not the first, second, or third. It is the last. And so I went to the United Nations in hopes that diplomacy would solve the threat. And as—they passed a resolution 15 to nothing, and Saddam Hussein just ignored it, just like he had done 16 different resolutions.

You know, we didn't find the stockpiles we thought we found—that we thought we would find, that everybody thought we'd find. But we did find that he had the capability to restart a weapons programs—he still hated us—that he was using the Oil for Food Programme to game the system, to get the world to look the other way, to get rid of the sanctions so he could restart his programs. The biggest danger we face is a terrorist network ending up with weapons of mass destruction. Knowing what I know today, I would have made the same decision. [*Applause*] Thank you.

My opponent was recently interviewed, and he said September the 11th, in quotes, his words, "did not change me much at all." See, and it's reflected in his attitude and his policies. He says, "Well, this is just a intelligence and law enforcement matter." No, this is a matter that requires all the assets of the United States of America in order to protect you.

He said that Iraq is a "diversion" from the war on terror. That's a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of the world in which we live, and it's a dangerous misunderstanding. Mr. Zarqawi, who is fighting us in Iraq, was in Afghanistan, in terror training camps. He then got run out of Afghanistan because of us and moved to Iraq. He then was working with a poisons factory in northern Iraq. And now we've got him on the run inside of Iraq, and he's fighting us. And he says this is a diversion? Does he think if we weren't in Iraq that Mr. Zarqawi would become a peaceful citizen of the world? [*Laughter*] He's a dangerous man. He hates what we stand for. He intends to inflict harm. It is best we defeat Zarqawi in Iraq so we do not have to face him here at home.

You cannot win a war when you don't believe we're fighting one, and that's my opponent. The most solemn duty of the American President is to protect the American people. If we show uncertainty or weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. It's not going to happen on my watch.

The third lesson—fourth lesson is when we put somebody in harm's way, they deserve the full support of our Government. And that's why I went to the United States Congress and asked for $87 billion of very important funding, funding to support our troops in combat. And we received great support, strong bipartisan support. I want you to tell your friends and neighbors of this startling statistic. Of the 100 Members of the United States Senate, only 4 voted to authorize the use of force and then did not vote for the funding to support the troops in combat, 2 of whom are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. They asked him, they said, "How did you make that vote?" He said, "Well, I actually did vote for the $87 billion, right before I voted against it." It may be the most famous quote of the 2004 campaign. They then kept pressing him and pressing him, and he finally said, "The whole thing is a complicated matter." There is nothing complicated about supporting the men and women who wear the United States uniform in harm's way. [*Applause*] Thank you all.

I want to thank the family members of our military who are here. I want to thank the veterans who are here who have set such a great example for those who wear the uniform.

I want to share one more thing with you that I think is important for you to know about me. I believe in the power of liberty

to transform societies. Let me tell you what I mean by that. Perhaps an example is the best way to make my point. Laura and I have a great friend in Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan. We like him. He's a fun guy to be around. He's a good friend. I saw him in New York at the United Nations in early September. I said, "You know, I'm talking about you when I get out there on the campaign trail. I hope you don't mind." He said, "Fine, go ahead and talk about me." I didn't ask him permission to tell you what I'm about to tell you, and that is, Elvis is his favorite singer—truthfully—[*laughter*]—and "High Noon" is his favorite movie. [*Laughter*]

Anyway, so, you know, it doesn't sound that—must not sound—to some it probably doesn't sound that profound that the Prime Minister of Japan and I are friends. But remember this part of history: 60 years ago, they were the sworn enemy of the United States of America. We were at war with the Japanese. And a lot of relatives of yours, I'm confident, fought in that war. My dad did, and other dads and granddads did as well. And it was a tough war, and we lost a lot of folks.

Yet, after we won the war, President Harry S. Truman believed in the power of liberty to transform an enemy into an ally. That's what he believed. So did a lot of other Americans. A lot of other Americans didn't agree with him, though. Why help the enemy? And the enemy couldn't become a democracy. You know, there was a lot of excuses and a lot of pessimism about the helping the Japanese. But fortunately, they stuck to it. Japan became a democracy. And today I sit down at the table with Prime Minister Koizumi, talking about how to keep the peace we all want, talking about keeping the peace.

Someday, an American President will be sitting down with the duly elected leader from Iraq, talking about the peace in the greater Middle East, and our children and our grandchildren will be better off for it.

I believe people in the Middle East want to live in freedom. That's what I believe. The people of Afghanistan showed what freedom can mean. Do you realize women stood in line for hours waiting to vote, after having lived in a society where they had no rights. And they stood in line to vote, even though the Taliban were threatening them with death and destruction. People want to be free. I believe women in the greater Middle East want to live in a free society. I believe moms and dads want to raise their children in a free and peaceful world. I believe all these things because freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

It's the last time I'm going to be in Eau Claire before the election, but I do want to thank you for coming. And when I campaigned in your State in 2000, I said if you gave me a chance to serve, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office to which I had been elected. With your help, we will carry Wisconsin, and I will do so for 4 more years.

God bless. Thank you all for coming. Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:49 p.m. at J&D Manufacturing. In his remarks, he referred to Don and Diana Redetzke, founders, J&D Manufacturing; Scott K. Walker, Milwaukee County executive; John Gard, speaker, Wisconsin State Assembly; Dale Schultz, candidate for Congress in Wisconsin's Third Congressional District; Tim Michels, senatorial candidate in Wisconsin, and his wife, Barbara; Wayne LaPierre, executive vice president, and Chris W. Cox, Institute for Legislative Action executive director, National Rifle Association; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Statement on Signing the Belarus Democracy Act of 2004

October 20, 2004

The Belarus Democracy Act of 2004, which I signed into law earlier today, will help the cause of freedom in Belarus. This bipartisan legislation demonstrates America's deep concern over events in Belarus and a commitment to sustain those Belarusians who must labor in the shadows to return freedom to their country.

At a time when freedom is advancing around the world, Aleksandr Lukashenka and his Government are turning Belarus into a regime of repression in the heart of Europe, its Government isolated from its neighbors

and its people isolated from each other. We will work with our allies and partners to assist those seeking to return Belarus to its rightful place among the Euro-Atlantic community of democracies. There is no place in a Europe whole and free for a regime of this kind.

On October 17, Mr. Lukashenka claimed victory for referendum results that swept away constitutional limits on his term in office. The referendum campaign and concurrent Parliamentary elections were conducted in a climate of abuse and fear. OSCE and other observers have determined that this victory was achieved by fraudulent means.

These actions are the latest in a series of measures designed to stifle independent voices within Belarus. Since 2001, Belarusian authorities have systematically repressed independent media, trade unions, civic organizations, and religious congregations. The Lukashenka regime has repeatedly responded to the peaceful expression of opposition with beatings, arrests and, in a number of cases, the disappearance of opposition leaders.

The Belarus Democracy Act will help us support those within Belarus who are working toward democracy. We welcome this legislation as a means to bolster friends of freedom and to nurture the growth of democratic values, habits, and institutions within Belarus. The fate of Belarus will rest not with a dictator, but with the students, trade unionists, civic and religious leaders, journalists, and all citizens of Belarus claiming freedom for their nation.

NOTE: H.R. 854, approved October 20, was assigned Public Law No. 108–347.

Proclamation 7835—National Disability Employment Awareness Month, 2004

October 20, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Americans with disabilities are active and contributing members of our society, and they must have the opportunity to develop the skills they need to compete and obtain jobs in the 21st century workforce. By reducing physical barriers and false perceptions, our country meets our commitment to millions of Americans with disabilities, and benefits from their talents, creativity, and hard work.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) has brought about important progress in our Nation. Under my Administration's New Freedom Initiative, we continue to work to ensure that people with disabilities can participate fully in the workplace and all aspects of community life. Through funding for new technologies and innovative resources, we are changing old ways of thinking and fulfilling the Federal Government's commitment to opportunity for every citizen.

The New Freedom Initiative has helped enable individuals with disabilities to access assistive technologies. My Administration has invested in research and development for new technology. We have expanded the Department of Defense's Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program, which provides Federal employees with disabilities greater access to electronic and information technology. The Department of Labor launched *DisabilityInfo.gov* in 2002, an online resource that streamlines access to information about Federally sponsored employment, job accommodations, transportation, State and regional assistance programs, technology, and other programs relevant to the daily lives of individuals with disabilities.

We must foster a better understanding of ADA requirements and increase dialogue and cooperation between the business and disability communities. Through the New Freedom Small Business Initiative, the Department of Labor and the Small Business Administration are educating small business owners about the benefits of hiring people with disabilities and helping adult workers with disabilities acquire the skills and resources needed to become small business owners. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is releasing user-friendly information on how the ADA applies to particular disabilities in the workplace and providing free ADA workshops offering employment-related services and information sessions for small businesses. My Administration

is implementing the "Ticket to Work" program, which allows Social Security and Supplemental Security Income disability beneficiaries who want to work to choose their own employment-related services. The Department of Labor and other agencies are also improving the capacity of community One-Stop Career Centers to provide training and employment services to people with disabilities.

To recognize the contributions of Americans with disabilities and to encourage all citizens to ensure equal opportunity in the workforce, the Congress, by joint resolution approved August 11, 1945, as amended (36 U.S.C. 121), has designated October of each year as "National Disability Employment Awareness Month."

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 2004 as National Disability Employment Awareness Month. I call upon Government officials, labor leaders, employers, and the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:08 a.m., October 22, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 21, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on October 25.

Proclamation 7836—National Forest Products Week, 2004

October 20, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

America's forests are places of beauty and incredible natural wealth. They are homes to wildlife and offer many economic opportunities for our Nation. During National Forest Products Week, we recognize the many benefits of our forests and continue our dedication to protecting them.

Across our country, many communities rely on healthy forests for economic stability. Our forests provide paper products, building materials, chemicals, and many other items needed by families and small businesses across America. Responsible forest management helps provide jobs and maintain these important resources to help meet the daily needs of Americans and people around the world.

My Administration has made forest health a high priority, and we will continue to promote active management and forest conservation. Under the Healthy Forests Initiative, we acted to remove the causes of severe wildfires by thinning forest undergrowth before disaster strikes. And the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003, which I signed into law last December, expands our work, helping protect valuable lands that serve as habitat for wildlife and ensuring the safety and economic vitality of communities affected by wildfires. The Act enforces high standards of conservation to help return our forests to more natural conditions and maintain the full range of forest types.

To ensure that our forests remain a source of pride for all Americans, we must continue our tradition of protecting the land for future generations. By combining the ethic of good stewardship with the spirit of innovation, we can advance a healthy environment and continue economic growth and job creation.

In recognizing the importance of our forests, the Congress, by Public Law 86–753 (36 U.S.C. 123), as amended, has designated the week beginning on the third Sunday in October of each year as "National Forest Products Week" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this week.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 17 through October 23, 2004, as National Forest Products Week. I call upon all Americans to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of October, in

the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:08 a.m., October 22, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 21, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on October 25.

Executive Order 13359—Amendment to Executive Order 13173, Interagency Task Force on the Economic Development of the Central San Joaquin Valley

October 20, 2004

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to improve the operation of the Interagency Task Force on the Economic Development of the Central San Joaquin Valley, it is hereby ordered that Executive Order 13173 of October 25, 2000, is amended as follows:

Section 1. Section 1(b) is amended to read as follows:

"The Task Force shall consist exclusively of the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Director of National Drug Control Policy, the Administrator of General Services, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, or their designees, and such other senior executive branch officials as may be determined by the Task Force. The Chair of the Task Force shall be the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. Each of the Federal departments and agencies, as appropriate, shall designate one staff person, for the years 2004 through 2006, to work on issues of the Task Force and to ensure the participation of the staff person's department or agency in the operations of the Task Force."

Sec. 2. Section 1(c)(1) is amended by inserting "regulations," after "analyze".

Sec. 3. Section 5 is amended to read as follows:

"*Judicial Review.* This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the Federal Government and is not intended to, and does not, create any right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by a party against the United States, its agencies, entities, its officers or employees, or any other person."

George W. Bush

The White House,
October 20, 2004.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:08 a.m., October 22, 2004]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 21, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on October 25.

Executive Order 13360—Providing Opportunities for Service-Disabled Veteran Businesses To Increase Their Federal Contracting and Subcontracting

October 20, 2004

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to strengthen opportunities in Federal contracting for service-disabled veteran businesses, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. *Policy.* America honors the extraordinary service rendered to the United States by veterans with disabilities incurred or aggravated in the line of duty during active service with the armed forces. Heads of agencies shall provide the opportunity for service-disabled veteran businesses to significantly increase the Federal contracting and subcontracting of such businesses. To achieve that objective, agencies shall more

effectively implement section 15(g) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 644(g)), which provides that the President must establish a goal of not less than 3 percent for participation by service-disabled veteran businesses in Federal contracting, and section 36 of that Act (15 U.S.C. 657f), which gives agency contracting officers the authority to reserve certain procurements for service-disabled veteran businesses.

Sec. 2. *Duties of Agency Heads.* To implement the policy set forth in section 1, heads of agencies shall:

(a) develop a strategy to implement the policy set forth in section 1;

(b) make the agency's strategy publicly available and report annually to the Administrator of the Small Business Administration on implementation of the agency's strategy;

(c) designate a senior-level official who shall be responsible for developing and implementing the agency's strategy;

(d) include development and implementation of the agency's strategy and achievements in furtherance of the strategy as significant elements in any performance plans of the agency's designated agency senior-level official, chief acquisition officer, and director of small and disadvantaged business utilization; and

(e) include in the agency's strategy plans for:

(i) reserving agency contracts exclusively for service-disabled veteran businesses;

(ii) encouraging and facilitating participation by service-disabled veteran businesses in competitions for award of agency contracts;

(iii) encouraging agency contractors to subcontract with service-disabled veteran businesses and actively monitoring and evaluating agency contractors' efforts to do so;

(iv) training agency personnel on applicable law and policies relating to participation of service-disabled veteran businesses in Federal contracting; and

(v) disseminating information to service-disabled veteran businesses that would assist these businesses in participating in awards of agency contracts.

Sec. 3. *Additional Duties of Administrator of the Small Business Administration.* The Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall:

(a) designate an appropriate entity within the Small Business Administration that shall, in coordination with the Veterans Affairs' Center for Veterans Enterprise (CVE), provide to service-disabled veteran businesses information and assistance concerning participation in Federal contracting;

(b) advise and assist heads of agencies in their implementation of section 2 of this order; and

(c) make available to service-disabled veteran businesses training in Federal contracting law, procedures, and practices that would assist such businesses in participating in Federal contracting.

Sec. 4. *Additional Duties of Administrator of General Services.* The Administrator of General Services shall:

(a) establish a Government-wide Acquisition Contract reserved for participation by service-disabled veteran businesses; and

(b) assist service-disabled veteran businesses to be included in Federal Supply Schedules.

Sec. 5. *Additional Duties of the Secretary of Defense.* The Secretary of Defense shall direct the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) to develop training on contracting with service-disabled veteran businesses and make this training available on line through the DAU continuous learning program.

Sec. 6. *Additional Duties of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.* The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall assist agencies by making available services of the CVE and assist in verifying the accuracy of contractor registration databases with regard to service-disabled veteran businesses.

Sec. 7. *Additional Duties of the Secretary of Labor and Secretary of Veterans Affairs.* The Secretary of Labor and Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, respectively, direct the Transition Assistance Program and the Disability Transition Assistance Program to educate separating service members as to the benefits available to service-disabled veteran

businesses and as to potential entrepreneurial opportunities.

Sec. 8. *Definitions.* As used in this order:

(a) the term "agency" means an "executive agency" as that term is defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code, excluding an executive agency that has fewer than 500 employees, the Government Accountability Office, or a Government corporation;

(b) the term "service-disabled" means, with respect to disability, that the disability was incurred or aggravated in the line of duty in the active service in the United States Armed Forces;

(c) the term "service-disabled veteran" means a veteran, as defined in 38 U.S.C. 101(2), with a disability that is service-connected, as defined in 38 U.S.C. 101(16);

(d) the term "service-disabled veteran business" means a small business concern owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans, as defined in section 3(q) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632(q)); and

(e) the term "small business concern" has the meaning specified in section 3(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632(a)) and the definitions and standards issued under that section.

Sec. 9. *General Provisions.* (a) Heads of agencies shall carry out duties assigned by sections 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 of this order to the extent consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

(b) To the extent permitted by law, an agency shall disclose personally identifying information on service-disabled veterans to other agencies who require such information in order to discharge their responsibilities under this order.

(c) An agency that consists of a multimember commission shall implement this order to the extent it determines appropriate to the accomplishment of the agency's mission.

(d) This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities or entities, its officers, employees or agents, or any other person.

George W. Bush

The White House,
October 20, 2004.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:40 a.m., October 25, 2004]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 21, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on October 26.

Presidential Determination on Use of Cooperative Threat Reduction Funds in Albania Under Section 1308 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004

October 20, 2004

Presidential Determination No. 2005–04

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Presidential Determination on Use of Cooperative Threat Reduction Funds in Albania under Section 1308 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by section 1308 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004 (Public Law 108–136) (the "Act"), I hereby determine that the obligation and expenditure of Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) funds for the destruction of chemical warfare agents stockpiled in Albania, will permit the United States to take advantage of an opportunity to achieve long-standing nonproliferation goals. I also determine that this project to destroy the chemical warfare agents stockpiled in Albania will be completed within a short period of time and that the Department of Defense is the entity of the Federal Government that is most capable of carrying out this project.

You are authorized and directed to transmit this determination, along with the justification and project description required by section 1308(d)(2) of the Act, to the Congress

no later than 10 days after the obligation of funds for this project and to arrange for the publication of this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 21.

Presidential Determination Relating to Obligation of Cooperative Threat Reduction Funds in Albania Under Section 1308 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004

October 20, 2004

Presidential Determination No. 2005–05

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Presidential Determination Relating to Obligation of Cooperative Threat Reduction Funds in Albania under Section 1308 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004

Pursuant to section 1308(e) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004 (Title XIII of Public Law 108–136) and the authority vested in me by section 1203(d) of the Cooperative Threat Reduction Act of 1993 (Title XII of Public Law 103–160), as amended (CTR Act), I hereby certify that Albania is committed to the courses of action enumerated in section 1203(d) of the CTR Act.

I have also enclosed the justification for this certification.

You are authorized and directed to transmit this certification and justification to the Congress and to arrange for the publication of this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 21.

Remarks in Downingtown, Pennsylvania

October 21, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming. I appreciate you all being here. Thanks for coming. Thanks for coming. I appreciate such a warm welcome. I'm proud to be back in Chester County, Pennsylvania. I'm here to ask for your help. We're less than two weeks away, when the people get to go express their opinion in the polls. And I believe with your help, we're going to win the State of Pennsylvania.

I know a lot of people are working hard in this campaign, and I am here to thank you. I want to thank you for putting up the signs. I want to thank you for making the phone calls. I want to thank you for reminding our fellow citizens we have a duty to go to the polls in a democracy. And when you get them headed to the polls, remind them if they want a safer America, a stronger America, and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

So ever since Barbara and Jenna were young, I've been telling them we're going to go on the great family camping trip. [*Laughter*] I'm sure they envisioned the Colorado River or the wilds of Alaska, but no, the great family camping trip turned out to be the campaign of 2004. And I can't tell you—I cannot tell you how great it is to have my daughter introduce me in front of you all. I'm proud of Barbara. I love her dearly. And I thank you for joining me, darling.

My only regret, which is I'm sure your regret, is that Laura is not here—and Jenna, of course, but she's with Laura. See, when I asked Laura to marry me, she said, "Fine, I will marry you, so long as I never have to give a speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay, you've got a deal." Fortunately, she did not hold me to that deal. Laura is giving a lot of speeches, and when she does, the American people see a warm, compassionate, strong First Lady.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you all.

I am proud of my runningmate. I met with the Vice President this morning at our national security briefing. It—taking a look at

him reminded me I didn't pick him because of his hairdo. [*Laughter*] He does not have the waviest hair in the race. [*Laughter*] But I picked him because of his experience and sound judgment. He's doing a great job for the American people.

By the way, a fellow you trained is doing a great job in Washington, and that would be your former Governor, Tom Ridge. He is a fine member of a very strong Cabinet. And he is doing a fine job of helping protect this homeland.

I want to thank your two United States Senators for their service to your State. First, I hope you put Arlen Specter back into office. He's a good Senator. And I'm proud to work with your other Senator, Rick Santorum.

I want to thank Congressman Jim Gerlach for his service to this district. I appreciate you, Congressman. He's somewhere around here. Where—there you are, Congressman. Good to see you. I see you're sitting next to a good fellow in Congressman Joe Pitts—appreciate you coming, Joe. And Congressman Tom Feeney from the State of Florida is with us. Feeney—yes, what are you doing here? Get back to your district and turn out the vote. [*Laughter*] I'll see you down there Saturday. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank all the local folks who are here. I want to thank my friend Alan Novak, who is the party chairman. I want to thank—[*applause*].

Barbara and I just had a chance to meet with four doctors from the area and a patient, Charlene Ware. And the docs were all telling me you got a problem here. We're going to talk about health care here today. I want to thank the docs for taking time to visit with me to share their concerns. And part of my address today is to share their concerns with you, because in order to make sure we've got a good health care system, we've got to make sure you have good professionals remain right here in your neighborhood to help solve the problems you have.

We have a lot at stake in this election. There are big issues that we're discussing. When I ran for President 4 years ago, none of us could have ever envisioned the horror of September the 11th. Since that day, I have led a comprehensive strategy to defeat the terrorists, to keep the homeland safe and secure. I pledged to the American people, we would be resolute and determined and do our duty to protect you, and I kept my pledge.

Our economy has been through a lot. When you're out rounding up the vote, remind people about what we have been through. The stock market was in serious decline 6 months prior to my arrival in Washington, DC. And then we went through a recession. We had some corporate scandals. We passed tough laws, by the way. We have made it abundantly clear we will not tolerate dishonesty in the board rooms of America. And then we got attacked. It cost us about a million jobs in the 3 months after September the 11th. I pledged to the American people, we would reduce your taxes to get our economy going again. I kept my word. Our economy is strong, and it is getting stronger.

I promised to reform our public schools and to challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations. I kept my word. We passed the No Child Left Behind Act, and we're closing an achievement gap all across America. And we're not going to go back to the days of mediocrity and low standards.

Another major area that needs reform is health care. We have made a good start. And in a new term, I will build on our efforts to improve America's health care. Health care is an essential issue in this campaign. And it's an essential issue in Pennsylvania, and that's why I'm delighted to come here to talk about it.

Across America, small-business owners are struggling with the high cost of providing health insurance for their employees. Some workers have lost good coverage because they have changed jobs. Women have lost doctors they trust because of frivolous lawsuits. We need to act on these concerns. And we need to act in a practical, responsible way.

Here, America faces a clear choice. When it comes to health care, Senator Kerry's prescription is bigger Government with higher costs. My reforms will lower costs and give more control and choices to the American people.

The United States of America has a world-class health care system that leads the world

in providing amazing treatments and cures for millions of people. As a candidate for President, I had pledged to double the budget of the National Institutes of Health to make sure we stay on the leading edge of change and reform. I kept my word. We have the most advanced hospitals in the world who do the most innovative research. We have the finest, most highly trained health care professionals in the world. We lead the world because we believe in a system of private medicine that encourages innovation and change.

Yet, rising costs and changes in the way Americans live and work are putting affordable health care out of the reach of too many of our citizens. Today I want to talk about a commonsense way to make health care more affordable and accessible while preserving America's system of private medicine.

Our reforms will help our families and individuals afford health insurance and save for health care expenses. They will help more small businesses provide health care coverage for their employees. And that's important, because more than one-half of the uninsured working Americans work for small businesses. My reforms will make sure low-income Americans, especially children, get the health care they need. They will ensure preventative care and prescription drug coverage for our seniors on Medicare and provide quality health care for our Nation's veterans. And my reforms address the root causes of rising health care costs, which make health care more expensive for everyone.

In a new term, we'll take five practical steps to make health care more affordable and accessible in America. And here they are.

First, we'll expand health savings accounts or HSAs. An HSA is an innovative approach to health care that gives you affordable coverage for major illness and allows you to save money, tax-free, up to a set limit to use for routine medical expenses. You can make a contribution to this account; your government can make a contribution to the account; or your employer can make a contribution to the account. If you don't use all the money in a year, you can roll it over, tax-free, to meet future expenses.

Health savings accounts protect you against catastrophic medical expenses. Because you can take your savings account from job to job, it provides you more security if you change jobs. This approach will help our Nation confront the rising cost of health care, and this is how.

One of the reasons why health care costs are on the rise is that consumers are not involved in the decisionmaking process. Most health care costs are covered by third parties, and therefore, the user of health care is really not the purchaser of health care. With HSAs, we introduce market forces. It means you can shop around for the health care that's best for you. It means you'll be able to get better health care at better prices, because you're the decisionmaker.

To help more people own HSAs, I proposed allowing individuals to deduct the cost of their insurance premiums from their taxes. To help employers cover more workers, I proposed tax credits for small businesses to pay into HSAs for their employees. To help the uninsured, I proposed a $3,000 refundable tax credit to help low-income families buy their own HSAs. These incentives will allow many more of our fellow citizens to have a health care account that they manage and that they call their own.

To help people afford health care, we will pass association health plans, which allows small firms to join together, to pool risk so they can buy insurance at the same discounts big companies are able to do. That means a stand-alone family restaurant in Pennsylvania can join together with other small restaurants all around the country so they can spread the risk, so they don't have to buy insurance in the market as a stand-alone entity. This is a practical way to enable small businesses to better afford health care for their employees.

I view a health savings account or an association health plan as commonsense ideas. It makes sense. Yet my opponent is against both of them. He doesn't agree. And there's a reason why. Senator Kerry's idea of reform always involves bigger and more intrusive Government.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And his health care proposal proves my point. In one of our debates,

Senator Kerry looked into the television camera with a straight face and said, quote, "Government has nothing to do with it." That was in reference to his health care plan. I could barely contain myself. In fact, Government has a whole lot to do with his plan, and that's important for you to know. Senator Kerry's proposal would expand the Government health care rolls by nearly 22 million Americans. That would be the largest expansion of Government health care in American history. Eight out of ten people who get health coverage under his plan would be placed on a Government program.

He would make Medicaid a large—a program so large that employers would have the incentive to drop private coverage so the Government would pick up the insurance tab for their employees. Now, think about that. When you make Medicaid more accessible, the small business will have the incentive to say, "Well, the Government will provide the insurance, so I don't have to." That's why I say that some 8 million Americans will go from private insurance to Government-run insurance. And Medicaid is a Government-run program.

The Senator wants the Federal Government to pick up the tab for large medical bills that private employer-sponsored plans now pay for. In other words, the Federal Government is going to become like an insurance company, a re-insurer, which sounds fine on the surface except remember this, when the Federal Government writes the check, the Federal Government also writes the rules. And when the Federal Government starts to write the rules, the Government decides who's covered and who gets the coverage and how much care you get.

In addition, an independent study estimates that John Kerry's plan would impose at least 225 new regulatory mandates on small businesses. One group looked at the plan and described it as an overpriced albatross. [*Laughter*] That's being kind. [*Laughter*] This is a plan that will create burdens that our job creators cannot afford and do not deserve.

And the plan costs a lot: $1.2 trillion. That's with a "T." That's a lot. [*Laughter*] And he says, "Oh, don't worry, I'm going to pay for it all by taxing the rich." You can't raise enough money by taxing the rich to pay for a $1.2 trillion health care plan. Matter of fact, if you run up the top two brackets, it raises between 600 billion and 800 billion dollars, so there is a gap between what he promises and how he says he's going to pay for it. And guess who usually fills the gap? Yes, you do.

There's also something else wrong with saying "to tax the rich." The rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason: to slip the tab to you. We're not going to let him tax you; we're going to carry Pennsylvania on November the 2d.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you all.

When you're out there campaigning and rounding up the vote, remind people about the facts of his plan. The Kerry plan would move America down the road toward Federal control of health care, which would lead to lower quality and health-care rationing. Other countries have tried centralized health care, and it didn't work. We have great quality health care in America because it is a private-center system. And I intend to keep it that way. Health care decisions ought to be between doctors and patients, not by officials in Washington, DC.

Third, we must fix our broken legal system. Junk lawsuits are expensive for doctors and hospitals to fight in court. They are expensive to settle out of court. They drive up the cost of liability insurance for every doctor, and they increase the cost of health care for all Americans.

To avoid junk lawsuits, many doctors practice defensive medicine. They order tests and write prescriptions that aren't really necessary just to protect themselves from lawsuits. That's what happens in a society that has too many lawsuits. The practice of defensive medicine raises costs for patients and small businesses and adds about $28 billion a year to the Federal budget. Remember, the Federal budget takes care of Medicare and Medicaid and veterans, and the practice of defensive medicine runs up the cost to the Federal Government, which really runs up your tab. See, you pay for it. When we're talking about the Government's money, we're really talking about your money. We

want our doctors focused on fighting illness, not on having to fight lawsuits.

The effects of the litigation culture are real in the State of Pennsylvania. They are hurting the quality of life in this State. Medical liability premiums are skyrocketing in this State, as they are in other States. For specialists in high-risk fields like ob-gyn, those premiums have doubled or tripled in some counties since 2000. And guess what happens? Docs leave the practice of medicine.

In the past 2 years, Mercy and Methodist Hospitals in Philadelphia both stopped delivering babies. The quality of life is deteriorating because of these lawsuits. Brandywine's only trauma center was forced to close. The quality of life is deteriorating because of these junk lawsuits. According to a recent poll, one in four people in Pennsylvania have been forced to change doctors in the last year because liability costs have forced their doctor to move, to stop practicing, or to discontinue procedures. And every time a good doctor is forced out of a community by lawsuits or the fear of lawsuits, the quality of life deteriorates.

Not long ago, I met Mary Coar from Honesdale. Her ob-gyn had to give up delivering babies because of liability concerns. When Mary was 4 months pregnant, she started driving 50 miles each way to see a different doctor. When Mary's daughter arrived this summer, she was delivered by a doctor she had never met. When a mother is looking forward to having a baby, the last thing she needs is uncertainty about her health care. For the sake of women and families across this State and this country, we need medical liability reform.

The difference between my opponent's point of view and mine is very clear on this issue. He has voted 10 times against medical liability reform during his Senate career. This year, when the Senate considered bills to protect ob-gyns and trauma physicians, Senator Kerry opposed them. Now, I know we're in a campaign, and he's paying lip service to legal reform. But it's his votes and his actions, not his words, that really count. He can run from his record, but he cannot hide.

In a new term, we'll pass real caps on noneconomic damages. This is a national problem requiring a national solution. And I will lead the United States Congress to pass medical liability reform.

Fourth, we'll reduce health care costs by applying modern information technology to our medical system. Many doctors' offices practice 21st century medicine; many hospitals practice 21st century medicine but still have 19th century filing systems. And in hospitals, there's more risk of medical error when all the records are handwritten on paper instead of cross-checked on a computer. That makes sense. Doctors don't write very well, anyway. [*Laughter*] They write about as well as I speak English. [*Laughter*]

The current system is costly and is wasteful and sometimes horrible—sometimes harmful. And we're on our way to fixing it. I've set a goal to make electronic medical records available for most Americans within the next decade. We're working with States and private hospitals to set standards for information storage and sharing. When the health care community fully maximizes the use of information technology, we will reduce medical costs by as much as 20 percent. We will cut medical errors, and we will save lives.

Fifth, we're cutting health care costs by moving cheaper generic drugs to the market faster. My administration is making sure that drug companies do not use delaying tactics to keep cheaper generic equivalents from getting to the consumers. Our actions will save Americans at least $35 billion on the medicine over the next 10 years. And that will make lifesaving drugs more affordable to our seniors.

As we move forward and make health care more affordable and accessible, we'll also keep the commitments we've made, commitments necessary for a compassionate country. We have strengthened and modernized Medicare. I told the American people we had a problem with Medicare when I was campaigning. I brought Republicans and Democrats together, and I kept my word in modernizing Medicare.

Listen, Medicare would pay thousands of dollars for a heart surgery but not one dime for the prescription drug that could prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. It didn't make any sense. And so we've strengthened and modernized Medicare. I signed a bill to strengthen the system.

Now seniors are getting discounts on their medicine with drug discount cards. And low-income seniors are getting $600 worth of help a year to buy those medicines. And beginning in 2006, all seniors will be able to get prescription drug coverage under Medicare.

We have another difference of opinion on this issue. My opponent voted against the Medicare bill that included prescription drug coverage for seniors, even though that bill was supported by AARP and other seniors' groups. Later, he said, quote, "If I'm the President, we're going to repeal that phony bill." Then he said—then he said a little later——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. ——"No, I don't want to repeal it." That sounds familiar.

Audience members. Flip-flop! Flip-flop! Flip-flop!

The President. As President for the next 4 years, I will defend the reforms we have worked so hard to pass so we can keep the promise to our seniors.

We'll keep our commitment to America's children by helping them get a healthy start in life. I'll work with Governors and community leaders and religious leaders to make sure every eligible child is enrolled in our Government's low-income health insurance program. We will not allow a lack of attention or information to stand between millions of children and the health care they need.

I know some of you here are worried about the upcoming flu season. I want to assure our seniors and families with young children that our Government is doing everything possible to help seniors and children get their shots, despite the major manufacturing defect that has caused this problem. We have millions of vaccine doses on hand, and millions more will be shipped in the coming weeks. We're working closely with State and local officials to get the flu vaccine to the most vulnerable Americans throughout our country. If you're feeling healthy, like I'm feeling healthy these days, don't get in line for the flu shot.

To make sure health care is available, we will keep our commitment to low-income Americans by expanding America's community health centers. Community health centers take the pressure off of local emergency rooms, improve care for the needy, and lower costs for us all. Since I took office, we have opened or expanded more than 600 community health centers. In a new term, we'll open or expand 600 more and bring healing to areas with the greatest need. Every poor county in America should have a rural or community health center.

And finally, we will keep our commitment to American veterans who have served our country so well. We have increased spending for the veterans during my time by $22 billion, which is double the amount my predecessor did in the 8 years he served as President of the United States. We're reducing the backlog in veterans' health care claims. We're modernizing our VA health centers and building new ones. Men and women who wore this Nation's uniform deserve first-class medical care, and we are getting the job done.

Health care is one of the most important issues facing our country. I'm glad you came today to let me talk about it. I'm passionate in understanding there is a right way to make sure health care is available and affordable and a wrong way. I feel strongly that the way I have proposed is the right way for Americans.

There is a big difference of philosophy in this campaign. If you think about it, on issue after issue after issue, my opponent wants the Government to dictate to the American people. I want the American people to decide. He trusts Government; I trust the people.

I'm ready for the work ahead. I know what we need to do to make sure this country is a more hopeful country and a more secure country. I've set out a set of clear priorities based upon a political philosophy that says Government will help people realize their dreams, not tell them how to live their lives.

We'll move forward on a health care system that makes sure we got the best health care system in the world, a health care system where the decisions will be made by doctors and patients, not by officials in our Nation's Capital. We'll continue to promote excellence in every public school, so no child is left behind. I'll continue to promote a pro-

growth, pro-entrepreneur, pro-small-business, pro-farmer economic agenda so people can find work.

But all progress ultimately depends on the security of our Nation. We're in the middle of a global war on terror. We face an enemy that is determined to kill the innocent and convert our country into a battlefield. In this war on terror, there is no place for confusion, no substitute for victory.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. The most solemn duty of the American President is to protect the American people. If America shows uncertainty or weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

Since that terrible morning of September the 11th, 2001, we've fought the terrorists across the Earth, not for pride, not for power, but because the lives of our citizens are at stake. Our strategy is clear. We'll defend the homeland. We'll strengthen our intelligence services. We will transform our All-Volunteer Army—I will keep our All-Volunteer Army an all-volunteer army. We will be relentless. We will stay on the offense. We will strike the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here in America. We will spread freedom and liberty. And we will prevail.

I want to tell you—I want to talk about two quick examples of what I'm talking about, about spreading freedom and liberty. I want you to remind people, particularly the young, about what is taking place in Afghanistan. Three-and-a-half years ago, the Taliban ran that country and Al Qaida was using Afghanistan as a place to train killers, some of whom came and took lives here in America—3 ½ years ago. Three-and-a-half years ago, young girls couldn't go to school because the vision of the Taliban was so dark. Three-and-a-half years ago, women were pulled in the public square and whipped if they didn't toe the ideological line of those ideologues of hatred. It was a grim world. And we acted to defend ourselves.

Remember, I set out a doctrine—and when the American President speaks, the American President better mean what he says. And I said, "If you harbor a terrorist, you're just as guilty as the terrorists." And I meant what I said. And we removed the Taliban for our own security. But because we did, millions of citizens of Afghanistan voted in the Presidential election that took place a couple of weeks ago. The first voter in the Presidential election was a 19-year-old woman. Afghanistan has gone from darkness to light because freedom is on the march. And America is better off for it. Free nations will be an ally on the war on terror. Free nations will serve as a great example for others.

Iraq will have Presidential elections in January. Think about how far that society has come. It's gone from torture chambers and mass graves to elections. Freedom is on the march.

One of my friends—one of our friends—Laura and my friends in the world is Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan. That probably doesn't sound like much—so what. Well, let me tell you what the "so what" is. It wasn't all that long ago that we were at war with the Japanese. It's an eternity if you're 58 years old, but really, in the march of history it wasn't all that long. And after we won the war against the Japanese—and it was a brutal war; my dad fought there; your dads and granddads fought there as well—Harry S. Truman believed in the power of liberty to transform an enemy into an ally.

There was a lot of people that were skeptical about that. A lot of people said, "Why do we want to care about an enemy?" or, "This enemy can't conceivably become an democracy. Why should we pay attention to somebody who—some country that killed a lot of our citizens?"

But there was great faith in the power of liberty to transform. That's what I believe. I believe in the power of liberty to transform societies. And as a result of that belief, I sit down with Prime Minister Koizumi, talking about how to achieve the peace we all want, talking about tough problems in the world so we can make a better world for our children and our grandchildren.

Someday, an American President will sit down with a duly-elected leader from Iraq, talking about the peace in the Middle East. And our children and our grandchildren will be better off for it.

I believe in the power of liberty. I believe that people in the Middle East want to be free. I believe women in the Middle East long to live in a free society. I believe mothers and dads in the Middle East want to raise their children in a free and peaceful world. I believe all these things because freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

Over the past nearly 4 years, we've done a lot of hard work together. We climbed the mountain, and we see the valley below. The valley below is of a more peaceful world, of a hopeful America. You know, when I campaigned in your State in 2000, I said if you gave me the chance to serve, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office. With your help, I will do so for 4 more years.

Thanks for coming. God bless. Thank you all. I appreciate your coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:37 p.m. at the United Sports Training Center. In his remarks, he referred to Alan Novak, chairman, Republican State Committee of Pennsylvania; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Remarks in Hershey, Pennsylvania

October 21, 2004

The President. Thank you all. Thank you all for coming. So he said, "A couple of hundred people might show up if you came." I came—thousands are here, and I'm grateful. You know what this tells me. With your help, we will carry Pennsylvania on November the 2d.

Listen, we have a duty in our country to vote. And I'm asking you to turn to your friends and neighbors, go to your coffee shops, your houses of worship, your community centers, and tell people that we have a duty. And as you get people going to the polls, don't overlook discerning Democrats, people like Senator Zell Miller from Georgia. Our message is for everybody. If you want a safer America, a stronger America, and a better America, put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you all for coming. I am so grateful so many came. It means a lot. My only regret is that Laura is not here to see this crowd. She was a public school librarian when I met her for the second time. See, we went to the 7th grade together, San Jacinto Junior High in Midland, Texas. When I met her the second time and I finally asked her to marry me, she said, "Fine, just so long as I never have to give a speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay, you got a deal." Fortunately, she didn't hold me to that promise. She's giving a lot of speeches, and when she does, the American people see a compassionate, strong, great First Lady. She is not with me today, but one of our twin daughters, Barbara, has come. Thank you for coming, baby. There's nothing better than campaigning for a President with a daughter you love.

I'm proud of my Vice President, Dick Cheney. Now, look, I admit it, he does not have the waviest hair in the race. [*Laughter*] I did not pick him because of his hairdo. [*Laughter*] I picked him because of his experience, his judgment. I picked him because he can get the job done.

I am proud to have been introduced to this great crowd by Major Dick Winters, an American hero who commanded Easy Company in World War II.

I want to thank Congressman Todd Platts for joining us today. I'm proud you're here, Congressman. I want to thank the folks who are here from the statehouse and local office. I'm here to say as clearly as I can that Scott Paterno needs to be the next Congressman from the 17th Congressional District. I appreciate Tom Corbett, who is going to be the next attorney general, and Jean Craige Pepper, who's running for treasurer.

But most of all, I want to thank you all for coming. It's getting close to voting time. It's time to crank up the phones. It's time to put up the signs. It is time to carry Pennsylvania.

In the last few years, the people have come to know me. They know my blunt way of speaking. I get that from my mother. They know I mangle the English language sometimes. I get that from my dad. [*Laughter*] Americans also know I tell you exactly what I'm going to do, and I keep my word.

When I came into office, the stock market had been in serious decline for 6 months. And the American economy was sliding into a recession. To help families and to get this economy growing again, I pledged to reduce taxes. I kept my word. The results are clear. The recession was one of the shallowest in American history.

Over the last 3 years, our economy has grown at rates as fast as any in nearly 20 years. The homeownership rate in America is at an alltime high. The past 13 months, we've added 1.9 million new jobs. The unemployment rate across our country is 5.4 percent—lower than the average rates of the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s. Farm income is up. This economy is moving forward, and we're not going to go back to the days of tax and spend.

To make sure jobs are here in America, to make sure people can find work, America must be the best place in the world to do business. That means lessregulations on our job creators. That means we've got to do something about these frivolous lawsuits that are plaguing small-business owners.

To keep jobs here in America, Congress needs to pass my energy plan. It's a plan that encourages conservation and encourages renewables. It's a plan that encourages clean coal technology. It is a plan that recognizes, to keep jobs in America, we must be less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

To keep jobs here in America, we must open up markets for U.S. products. Listen, we can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere, so long as the rules are fair.

To make sure this economy continues to grow, we've got to be wise about how we spend your money and keep the taxes low. Taxes are an issue in this campaign.

Now, my opponent has his own history on the economy.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Yes. In 20 years as a Senator from Massachusetts, he's built a record of a Senator from Massachusetts. [*Laughter*] He's voted—he has voted to raise taxes 98 times.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Yes. He voted to tax Social Security benefits.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Ninety-eight times in twenty years—that's about five times a year. I would call that a predictable pattern. See, he can run from his record, but he cannot hide.

Now he's promising not to raise taxes for anyone who earns less than $200,000 a year. He said that with a straight face. [*Laughter*] The problem is, to keep that promise he'd have to break all his other promises. He has promised $2.2 trillion in new Federal spending. That's trillion with a "T." And so they said, "How are you going to pay for it?" And he said, fine, he's just going to raise taxes on the rich. Now, you've heard that before. When you try to raise taxes on the rich, that raises between 600 billion and 800 billion. There's a gap between what he's promised and how he says he's going to pay for it. And guess who usually gets to fill the gap?

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. There's something else wrong with the "tax the rich" slogan. The rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason: to slip the bill and pass it to you. We are not going to let him tax you; we will carry Pennsylvania and win on November the 2d.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. When I came into office, our public schools had been waiting decades for hopeful reform. Too many of our children were being shuffled through school without learning the basics. I pledged to restore accountability in the school and to challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations. I kept my word. We passed the No Child Left Behind Act, and we're seeing results. Our children are making sustained gains in reading and math. We're closing achievement gaps all around this country, and we're not going to go back the days of low standards and accepted mediocrity.

When I came into office, we had a problem in Medicare. Medicine was changing, but Medicare was not. For example, we'd pay hundreds—tens of thousands of dollars for heart surgery but not one dime for the prescription drugs that could prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. That did not make any sense to our seniors. It wasn't right. I pledged to bring Republicans and Democrats together to strengthen

and modernize Medicare. I kept my word. Seniors are getting discounts on medicine. And beginning in 2006, all seniors will be able to get prescription drug coverage under Medicare.

We got more to do on health care. We've got to make sure health care is available and affordable. We'll have a safety net for those with the greatest needs. That's why I believe in community health centers for the poor and the indigent. We'll do more to make sure poor children are fully subscribed in our programs for low-income families.

Most of the uninsured in America work for small businesses. Small businesses are having trouble affording health care. To enable small businesses to afford health care, we must allow them to pool together so they can buy insurance at the same discount big companies get to do. We will expand health savings accounts so workers and small businesses are able to pay lower premiums and people can save tax-free in a health care account they manage and call their own.

To make sure health care is available and affordable, we have to do something about the frivolous lawsuits that are running up the cost of medicine and running good doctors out of practice. You have a problem here in the State of Pennsylvania because of these junk lawsuits. You're losing too many good docs. Too many ob-gyns are leaving the practice. Too many pregnant women are wondering whether or not they're going to get the health care they need in order to bring their child into this world. The system is broken. You cannot be pro-doctor, pro-patient, and pro-personal-injury-lawyer at the same time. You have to make a choice. My opponent put a personal injury lawyer on the ticket.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He voted against medical liability reform 10 times. I'm standing with the doctors. I'm standing with the patients. I'm standing with the people of Pennsylvania. I'm for medical liability reform—now.

I laid out a health care plan that's sensible and reasonable. Now, my opponent has got his health care plan of his own. And it's a plan for bigger Government.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Now, the other day in the debate, he looked right in the camera again, and he said this about his health care plan: "The Government has nothing to do with it." I remember him saying that. I was standing right there. [*Laughter*] I could barely contain myself. The Government has got a lot to do with his health care plan. Eight out of ten Americans would end up on a Government health insurance program. Eight million Americans would lose their private health insurance at work, and most would go on a Government plan. He says his plan helps small businesses. That's what—that's not what small-business groups think. They've called it an overpriced albatross that would saddle small businesses with 225 new mandates.

I have a different view. We've got to help small businesses afford insurance, not saddle them with a bunch of rules and regulations from Washington, DC. In all we do to reform health care, I believe the health decisions need to be made by doctors and patients, not by officials in our Nation's Capital.

I'll continue to set out policies for an optimistic and hopeful America. I believe this country should be an ownership society. You know, there's a saying, no one ever washes a rental car. [*Laughter*] There's a lot of wisdom in that statement. When you own something, you care about it. When you own something in America, you care about the future of our country.

That's why we promote entrepreneurship in this administration. Every time a small business is started in America, somebody is achieving the American Dream. We're encouraging health savings accounts so people have the security of owning and managing their own health care account. We're encouraging homeownership. Listen, more and more people are able to open up the door where they live and say, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property." And America is better off for it.

In a new term, we'll take the next step to build an ownership society by strengthening Social Security. Now, let me speak to the seniors who are here. You remember the 2000 campaign when they were running the TV ads that said, "If George W. gets elected, the seniors will not get their checks." That's

old-style scare politics. I want you to remind your friends and neighbors, they got their checks. They'll continue to get their checks. And baby boomers like me are in pretty good shape when it comes to the Social Security trust fund.

But we need to worry about our children and our grandchildren. See, we need to worry about whether or not the Social Security trust will be solvent when they need help in retirement. I think younger workers ought to be allowed to take some of their payroll taxes and set up a personal savings account that earns a better rate of return, an account they call their own, an account the Government cannot take away.

When it comes to Social Security, as you heard the other night in the debates, my opponent wants to maintain the status quo.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. The job of a President is to confront problems, not pass them on to future generations or future Presidents. He's against the Social Security reforms I laid out, and he's against about every other reform that gives more authority and control to the individual. On issue after issue, from Medicare without choices to schools with less accountability to raising taxes, he takes the side of more centralized control and more Government.

There is a word for that attitude. There is a word for that philosophy. It is called liberalism. Now, he dismisses that word as a label. He must have seen it differently when he said, "I'm a liberal and proud of it." [*Laughter*] The others have noticed as well. There's a nonpartisan National Journal magazine that did a study and named him the most liberal Member of the United States Senate. That takes a lot of hard work in that bunch. [*Laughter*] Can you imagine being more liberal than Ted Kennedy?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. He can run—he can even run in camo—but he cannot hide.

I have a different record. I have a different philosophy. I do not believe in big Government, and I do not believe Government should be indifferent. I'm what I call a compassionate conservative. I believe in policies that empower people to improve their lives, not try to run their lives. We'll continue to help men and women all across this country find the skills and tools they need to prosper in a time of change, skills and tools necessary to realize the great promise of our country. That's how I have led, and that's how I will continue to lead for 4 more years.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. In this time of change, some things do not change. Those are the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. In changing times, we will support the institutions that give our lives direction and purpose, our families, our schools, our religious congregations. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every being counts. We stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. We stand for the second amendment, which protects every American's individual right to bear arms. We stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

My opponent's words on these issues are a little muddy, but his record is plenty clear. He says he supports the institution of marriage but voted against the Defense of Marriage Act.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He voted against the ban on the brutal practice of partial-birth abortion.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He called the Reagan years as a period of moral darkness.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. There is a mainstream in American politics, and my opponent sits on the far left bank. During this campaign, he can run, but he cannot hide.

This election will also determine how America responds to the continuing danger of terrorism. I believe the most solemn duty of the American President is to protect the American people. If America shows uncertainty or weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

Since that terrible morning of September the 11th, 2001, we have fought the terrorists across the Earth, not for pride, not for power,

but because the lives of our citizens are at stake. Our strategy is clear. We are defending the homeland. I thank the first-responders who are here with us today. We're strengthening our intelligence. We're transforming our military. We will not have a draft. The All-Volunteer Army will remain an all-volunteer army. We are staying on the offensive. We will strike the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. We will spread freedom and liberty. And we will prevail.

Our strategy is succeeding. Think about the world, the way it was some 3½ years ago—think about this. Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida. Pakistan was a transit point for terrorist groups. Saudi Arabia was fertile ground for terrorist fundraising. Libya was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons. Iraq was a dangerous place and a gathering threat. And Al Qaida was largely unchallenged as it planned horrific attacks.

Because the United States of America led, Afghanistan is an ally in the war on terror and is now a free nation; Pakistan is capturing terrorist leaders; Saudi Arabia is making raids and arrests; Libya is dismantling its weapons programs; the army of a free Iraq is fighting for its country's freedom; and more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's associates and members have been brought to justice.

We are standing with the people of Afghanistan and Iraq. I want the youngsters here to understand what has taken place during a brief period of your life. It wasn't all that long ago that young girls couldn't go to school in Afghanistan. It wasn't all that long ago that their mothers were taken into the public square and whipped because they wouldn't toe the line of these ideologues of hate called the Taliban. It wasn't all that long ago that the people of that country lived in darkness. Because we acted in our own self-interest, because we acted to destroy the Al Qaida terrorists' training camps, because we worked to secure ourselves, 25 million people live in freedom. They had Presidential elections a couple of weekends ago in Afghanistan. The first voter in Afghanistan was a 19-year-old girl. Freedom is on the march, and the people of Afghanistan have gone from darkness to light.

The people of Iraq will be voting for a President in January. Think how far that society has come from the day of torture chambers and mass graves. It's in our interest that we spread freedom. Free societies will be hopeful societies which no longer feed resentments and breed violence for export. Free governments in the Middle East will fight the terrorists instead of harboring them. Freedom will help us keep the peace we all want. Freedom is on the move, and America is more secure for it.

So our mission is clear—our mission is clear. We will help these countries train armies and police forces and security forces in Afghanistan and Iraq so they can do the hard work of defending their freedom, so they can stand up and fight these terrorists who are trying to stop the advance of freedom. We'll help the countries get on the path of stability and democracy as quickly as possible, and then our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

We have a great United States military because those who wear the uniform are people of such great character and service and duty and honor. And I want to thank the veterans who are here today for having set such a great example for those who wear the uniform. And I want to thank the military families who are here for the sacrifices you have made. And I assure you, we'll keep the commitment we have made to the troops and their families. They will have the resources they need to complete their missions.

That's why I went to the Congress in September of 2003 and asked for $87 billion of supplemental funding to support our troops in harm's way. I received great bipartisan support. Your Senators, Senator Specter and Santorum, voted with me on that bill. It was an important piece of legislation. Most people up in Congress understood how important it was. As a matter of fact, only 12 Members of the United States Senate voted against funding for our troops, 2 of whom were my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Now, I want to tell you another startling statistic. When you're out gathering the vote—I want to tell you another startling statistic, a true fact. There were only 4 Members of the United States

Senate—4 out of 100—that had voted to authorize the use of force and then voted against the funding to support our troops in harm's way, 2 of whom are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. So they asked him how he could have made that vote. They asked him how he could have made that vote. And you might remember perhaps the most famous quote of the 2004 campaign. Here is what he said: "I actually did vote for the $87 billion, before I voted against it."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. They kept asking him, and he kept answering. He must have given five or six different explanations. One of the most interesting ones of all is he finally said, "The whole thing was a complicated matter." [*Laughter*] There's nothing complicated about supporting our troops in harm's way.

All elections come down to a choice, and in this, America's first Presidential election since September the 11th, the security of our country is at risk in many ways different than we have ever faced before. We're in the midst of a global war against a well-trained, highly motivated enemy, an enemy that has no conscience, an enemy that hates Americans because of the very freedoms we love. The next Commander in Chief must lead us to victory in this war. Yet, you cannot win a war when you do not believe you are fighting one.

Senator Kerry was recently asked how September the 11th had changed him. And he replied this: "It did not change me much at all." End quote.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. His unchanged world becomes obvious when he calls the war against terror primarily an intelligence and law enforcement operation rather than a war which requires the full use of American strength. Senator Kerry's top foreign policy advisor questioned this is even a war at all. And here's what he said: "We're not in a war on terror in a literal sense. It's like saying 'the war on poverty'—it's just a metaphor." End quote. It's a different mindset, a different attitude. Confusing food programs with terrorist killings reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of the world we live in, of the world we face. And this is very dangerous thinking.

Senator Kerry also misunderstands our battle against insurgents and terrorists in Iraq. He called Iraq a "diversion" from the war on terror. Let me talk about the case of one terrorist to show you how wrong this thinking is. The terrorist leader we face today in Iraq, the one responsible for car bombings and beheadings of Americans, is a man named Zarqawi. Zarqawi ran a terrorist training camp in Afghanistan until our military arrived. He then went to Iraq. He received medical care in Iraq. He plotted and planned in Iraq. To confirm where he's coming from, just the other day Zarqawi announced his allegiance to Usama bin Laden. If Zarqawi and his associates were not busy fighting American forces in Iraq, does my opponent think they would be living peaceful and productive lives? Course not. That's why Iraq is not a diversion but a central commitment in the war on terror.

The Senator the other day talked about the need for America to pass a "global test" when it comes to committing our troops.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I'm not making that up. He was standing right there when he said it. No, we'll work with our friends and allies. I'll continue to build alliances and strong coalitions. But I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

The President. I believe in the transformational power of liberty. That's what I believe. I believe liberty can transform nations. One of our friends—Laura and my friends is Prime Minister of Japan. He's a friend. I saw him at the United Nations in New York. I said, "Listen, I'm going to be talking about you on the campaign trail. Do you mind?" He said, "No, go ahead and talk about me." I said, "Okay." What he didn't—I didn't ask him permission to tell you that Elvis is his favorite singer. [*Laughter*] We've gotten to know him quite well.

It probably doesn't sound much to folks out there, that I would call him my friend. But remember, 60 years ago, we were at war with Japan. They were the sworn enemy of

the United States of America. My dad, like many of his generation, like many of the Band of Brothers, fought against the Japanese—people of that generation served. And your dads and granddads did the same, I'm confident.

After we won the war, Harry S. Truman, President of the United States, believed that liberty could transform an enemy into an ally. That's what he believed. There was a lot of skepticism about that, a lot of doubt. There was a lot of anger because of the war, and you can understand why. Families' lives have been turned upside down because of death during the war. A lot of people just said, "Well, the enemy can't possibly become a democracy." But our predecessors stayed with it. And as a result of that belief, I sit down at the table today talking about how to keep the peace with Prime Minister Koizumi.

Someday, an American President will be sitting down with a duly-elected leader of Iraq, talking about peace in the Middle East. And our children and our grandchildren will be better off for it.

I believe that millions in the Middle East plead in silence for their liberty. I believe women in the Middle East want to live in a free society. I believe mothers and fathers in the Middle East want to raise their children in a free and peaceful world. I believe all these things because freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. This is a time that requires firm resolve, clear vision, and a deep faith in the values that makes us a great nation.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It is a day I will never forget. I will never forget the voices of those in hardhats yelling at me at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." I will never forget the police or firefighter coming out of the rubble who grabbed me by the arm, and he looked me square in the eye, and he said, "Do not let me down." Ever since that day—ever since that day, I wake up every morning thinking about how to better protect our country. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

Four years ago, when I traveled your great State asking for the vote, I made a pledge that if you gave me a chance to serve, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office to which I have been elected. With your help, with your hard work, I will do so for 4 more years.

God bless. Thanks for coming. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:20 p.m. at Hershey Park Stadium. In his remarks, he referred to Tom Corbett, candidate for Pennsylvania State Attorney General; Jean Craige Pepper, candidate for Pennsylvania State Treasurer; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Memorandum on Delegation of Certain Functions Related to the Sudan Peace Act

October 21, 2004

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Delegation of Certain Functions Related to the Sudan Peace Act

By virtue of the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby delegate to you the determination, certification, and reporting functions conferred upon the President by sections 6(b)(1) and 6(c) of the Sudan Peace Act (Public Law 107–245).

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum.

Memorandum on Designation and Authorization To Perform Functions Under Section 319F–2 of the Public Health Service Act

October 21, 2004

Memorandum for the Director of the Office of Management and Budget

Subject: Designation and Authorization to Perform Functions Under Section 319F–2 of the Public Health Service Act

By the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby direct you to perform the functions vested in the President under section 319F–2(c)(6) of the Public Health Service Act, 42 U.S.C. 247d–6b(c)(6).

Any reference in this memorandum to the provision of any Act shall be deemed to include references to any hereafter-enacted provision of law that is the same or substantially the same as such provision.

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum.

Remarks in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

October 22, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming. It seems like yesterday I was here in Wilkes-Barre. Come to think of it, I was. [*Laughter*] I figure if I keep coming back, I'll meet everybody in town.

I'm coming back because I want you to know how important your vote is. That's why I'm here. We're close to voting time. I've come back to tell you how important your help is in this election. Find your friends and neighbors. Convince them to go to the polls on November the 2d. Do not overlook discerning Democrats, people like Senator Zell Miller. And remind your friends and neighbors, if they want safer America, a stronger, and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

I regret that Laura is not traveling with us today.

Audience members. Aw-w-w!

The President. Yes, that is generally the reaction—[*laughter*]—kind of like, "Why didn't you stay home and let her come?" [*Laughter*] You know, we were in the same grade at San Jacinto Junior High in Midland, Texas. That would be the seventh grade. And then I became reacquainted with her when she was a public school librarian. [*Laughter*] And when I asked her to marry me, she said, "Fine, but make me a promise." I said, "What is it?" "Promise me I'll never have to give a speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay, you got a deal." Fortunately, she didn't hold me to that promise. She's giving a lot of speeches. And when she does, the American people see a warm, compassionate, great First Lady.

I love traveling with my daughters on the campaign trail. There's nothing better than being with somebody who, well, tells you to keep your tie straight. [*Laughter*] "Don't spill your food before you get out there and talk to the people." [*Laughter*] You know, I used to tell Barbara and Jenna that one of these days we'll go on a camping trip together, the great family camping experience. I'm sure they envisioned the Colorado River or somewhere. Well, darling, this is it. This is the great—[*laughter*]. We're traveling this country asking for the vote, and I'm glad Barbara is by my side.

I spoke with our great Vice President this morning. His spirits are high. He's working hard. I admit that Vice President Cheney does not have the waviest hair in the race. [*Laughter*] I didn't pick him because of his hairdo. [*Laughter*] I picked him because of his experience, his sound judgment, and his ability to get the job done for the American people.

I'm pleased to be sharing the platform with Congressman Don Sherwood. He's doing a great job. And Congressman Jim Greenwood is traveling today. He comes up from the suburbs of Philadelphia. I'm proud to have his support, and I'm proud to call him friend. Thanks for coming, Congressman.

Specter is out there working on behalf of his own campaign, and Santorum is out there working for mine. They're two fine United

States Senators. I hope you put Arlen Specter back in office.

I want to thank all the State and local officials. I want to thank Jean Craige Pepper for being here, the candidate for treasurer of the State. I appreciate people who are running for office. I want to thank my friend Sammy Kershaw, country singer.

Most of all, I want to thank the grassroots activists who are here, the people putting up all the signs, making the phone calls, writing the letters. I'm here to thank you for what you're going to do as we're coming down the stretch. There is no doubt in my mind, with your hard work and with your help, we will carry Pennsylvania and win a great victory in November.

With just 11 days left in this campaign—who's counting? [*Laughter*] Voters are focusing on the issues that matter most for their families and for our country. You've heard the debates. You know where I stand. Sometimes you even know where my opponent stands. [*Laughter*] You've had a chance to see both of us in action, to measure our consistency, our resolve, our values, and our ability to lead. This election comes down to five clear choices for the American families, five choices on issues of great consequence: your family's security, your budget, your quality of life, your retirement, and the bedrock values that are so critical to our families and our future.

The first clear choice is very important because it concerns the security of your family. All progress on every other issue depends on the safety of our citizens. This will be the first Presidential election since September the 11th, 2001. Americans will go to the polls in a time of war and ongoing threat to our country. The enemies who killed thousands of innocent people are still dangerous and determined to strike us again. The outcome of this election will set the direction of the war against terror, and in this war, there is no place for confusion and no substitute for victory.

The most solemn duty of the American President is to protect the American people. If America shows uncertainty or weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

Since that terrible morning of September the 11th, 2001, we have fought the terrorists across the Earth, not for pride, not for power but because the lives of our citizens are at stake. Our strategy is clear. We're defending the homeland. We're strengthening our intelligence capabilities. We are transforming our All-Volunteer Army to make sure it remains an all-volunteer army. We are staying on the offensive.

And we are succeeding. More than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members and associates have been brought to justice, and the rest of them know we're after them. We are in a real war, and the only strategy must lead to victory.

My opponent has a different approach. He says that September the 11th, quote, "didn't change me much at all."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And that's pretty clear. He considers the war on terror primarily a law enforcement and intelligence gathering operation. His top foreign policy adviser has questioned whether it's even a war at all, saying that's just a metaphor, like the "war on poverty." I've got news. Anyone who thinks we are fighting a metaphor does not understand the enemy we face and has no idea how to win the war and keep America secure. My opponent also misunderstands our battle against insurgents and terrorists. He's called it a "diversion" from the war on terror. My opponent used to recognize Saddam Hussein as a threat. That's until he started to slide in the polls.

Saddam Hussein was a threat to the United States. He hated America. He had a long history of pursuing and even using weapons of mass destruction. He had ties to terrorists. He was firing missiles at American pilots enforcing the sanctions of the world. He paid families of suicide bombers. He was a threat.

We didn't find the stockpiles that we thought were in Iraq, that I thought was there, that my opponent thought was there, that the United Nations thought was there, that the world thought was there. But I want you to remember—tell your friends and neighbors what the Duelfer report did find. It said that Saddam Hussein had the intent and capability and the expertise to rebuild

a weapons program, that he was gaming the system, he was using the Oil for Food Programme to try to influence officials of other nations to get rid of the sanctions. And why? Because he wanted the world to look the other way so he could restart his programs. That was a risk we could not afford to take. Knowing what I know today, I would have taken the same action. America and the world are safer with Saddam Hussein sitting in a prison cell.

Remember, my opponent called our action a "mistake." That's after he started slipping in the polls. [*Laughter*]

Iraq is still dangerous because terrorists there are trying to stop the advance of freedom and elections. A man named Zarqawi is responsible for planting car bombs and beheading Americans in Iraq. He ran a terrorist training camp in Afghanistan until our coalition forces destroyed that camp. He then fled to Iraq where he's fighting us today. To confirm where he's coming from, he recently announced his allegiance to Al Qaida. If Zarqawi and his associates were not busy fighting American forces in Iraq, does my opponent think they would be peaceful citizens of the world? [*Laughter*] Does he think they'd be opening a small business somewhere? [*Laughter*] Fighting the likes of Zarqawi in Iraq is not a "diversion" from the war on terror; it is the way we will win the war on terror.

When it comes to your security, the choice in this election could not be clearer. You cannot lead our Nation to decisive victory on which the security of every American family depends if you do not see the true dangers of the post-September the 11th era. My opponent has a September 10th point of view. At his convention, he declared his strategy was to respond to attacks after America had been hit.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. As we learned on September the 11th, it's too late to respond. In our debates, he said we can defend America only if we pass a "global test."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I'm not making that up. He was standing right there when he said it. No, we'll work with friends and allies, but I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

For the sake of our freedom and for your security, we'll fight this war with every asset of our national power. We will protect America by striking the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. And we will prevail.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. We've got another powerful asset at our disposal, and that's liberty. And that's freedom.

I want the youngsters here listening to think about what has happened in a brief period of time, some 3½ years in Afghanistan. It wasn't all that long ago in that country that young girls were not allowed to go to school, and their mothers were taken into the public square and whipped or sometimes taken to a sports stadium and executed because they refused to toe the line of the ideologues of hate, the Taliban, which ran Afghanistan. In working to secure ourselves, in ridding that country of terrorist camps, of upholding a doctrine that said, "If you harbor a terrorist, you're just as guilty as the terrorist," we liberated over 25 million people in Afghanistan. And just a couple of weekends ago, millions of Afghan citizens voted in a Presidential election, and the first voter was a 19-year-old woman.

Freedom is on the march. That society has gone from darkness to light because of liberty, and America is more secure because of it. Free societies are peaceful societies. Free societies will not harbor terrorists. Free societies will be hopeful places where people can realize their dreams.

Iraq will have elections in January. Iraq is changing. Think how far that country has come from the days of mass graves and torture chambers and the brutal reign of one man. I believe liberty has the capacity to transform societies and make the world a more peaceful place.

One of our friends in the world is Prime Minister Koizumi. I said "our"—I'm talking about Laura and me. He is—he's a good man. He's a person with whom I work. It wasn't all that long ago that we were at war with the Japanese. See, 60 years ago, we were fighting the Japanese. My dad was in that

war. I'm confident many other people were in that war, or families represented here were—had fathers and grandfathers in the war against the Japanese.

After World War II, Harry Truman—after we won that war, Harry Truman believed in the power of liberty to transform an enemy into an ally. There were a lot of skeptics then. There were a lot of doubters, the Japanese—the enemy—could never become a democracy. "Why do we even want to help them," some would say. After all, they destroyed a lot of the U.S. lives. But there was faith and belief in the power of liberty to transform societies. And today, because of that belief, I sit down with the Prime Minister of Japan talking about keeping the peace that we all want, talking about dealing with the world's problems.

Someday, a duly-elected leader from Iraq will be sitting down with the President of the United States of America, talking about the peace in the Middle East, and our children and our grandchildren will be better off for it.

Freedom is on the march in this world. I believe everybody in the Middle East desires to live in freedom. I believe women in the Middle East want to live in a free society. I believe mothers and fathers want to raise their children in a free and peaceful world. I believe all these things because freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

The second clear choice in this election concerns your family budget. When I ran for President 4 years ago, I pledged to lower taxes for American families, and I kept my word. To help our families, we doubled the child credit to $1,000 per child. We reduced the marriage penalty. Our Tax Code should encourage marriage, not discourage marriage. We dropped the lowest tax bracket to 10 percent so working families, working Americans can keep more of their paychecks. We reduced income taxes for everyone that pays taxes. That's the fair way of doing things.

As a result of our policies, real after-tax income, money in your pocket that you can spend, is up about 10 percent since I took office. Because of tax relief, because we increased consumer spending and investment, our economy is overcoming the tough times we've been through.

Remind your friends and neighbors that when I got in office, the stock market had been in serious decline for 6 months prior to our arrival. Then we were in a recession. And the attacks of September the 11th, 2001, cost us nearly a million jobs in the 3 months after the attacks.

But because we acted, this economy of ours is strong and it's getting stronger. Our economy is growing at rates as fast as any in nearly 20 years. We've added 1.9 million new jobs in the last 3 months. The State of Pennsylvania has added 4,600 jobs in the month of September 2004. The unemployment rate across America is at 5.4 percent, lower than the average rates of the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s. And the new unemployment rate figure in the State of Pennsylvania released today is 5.3 percent.

My opponent has a very different plan for your budget. He intends to take a bigger chunk out of it.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He voted against the—he voted against a higher child tax credit. He voted against marriage penalty relief. He voted against lowering the tax rates. If his vote had prevailed, an average middle-class family would be paying $2,000 more a year to the IRS.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. That's a fact. It's also part of a pattern. See, the Senator voted 10 times to raise taxes on gasoline. All told, during his 20 years in the United States Senate, my opponent has voted to raise taxes 98 times. That's about five times a year. When he does something that often, he must really enjoy it. [*Laughter*] During his campaign, my opponent has made a lot of big, expensive promises. He promised about $2.2 trillion of new spending. That's with a "T." [*Laughter*] That's a lot even for a Senator from Massachusetts. So they said, "How are you going to pay for it?" He said, "Oh, we'll just tax the rich." We've heard that before, haven't we? He's going to raise the top two brackets. There's three things—a lot of things wrong with it, but let me give you three right off the bat.

One is, by raising individual rates, you're taxing many, many small businesses. Seventy percent of the new jobs in America are created by small businesses. Most small businesses pay tax at the individual income-tax level. And by running up the top two brackets, you're taxing the job creators. And that's bad economic policy.

Secondly, there's a gap between what he's promised and what he can deliver. By raising the top two brackets, you raise about 600 billion to 800 billion dollars, and he's promised 2.2 trillion. So there's a gap, a gap between the promises and what he can deliver. Guess who gets to usually fill those gaps?

Secondly—or thirdly, the rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason when it comes to taxes. That's to slip the bill and stick you with it. But we're going to protect the family budgets; we're going to carry Pennsylvania and win a great victory on November the 2d.

When it comes to your budget, you have a clear choice. My opponent has earned—and I mean earned—his rank as the most liberal Member of the United States Senate. He'll raise your taxes to fund bigger Government. I'm going to keep your taxes low. This is the road to prosperity. It's a road to economic vitality. Now, when it comes to taxes, he may try to run in a camouflaged outfit—[*laughter*]—but he cannot hide.

The third choice in this election involves the quality of life for our families. I believe a good education and quality health care are important for successful lives. When I ran for President 4 years ago, I promised to end the soft bigotry of low expectations by reforming our public schools, and I kept my word. We passed good education reform. We're raising the standards. We're making sure our schools are accountable, accountable to our parents. We're seeing progress. Math and reading scores are on the rise. We're closing the achievement gap all across this country. We will build on these reforms. We will extend them to our high schools so that not one single child in America is left behind.

We will continue to improve life for our families by making health care more affordable and more accessible. We'll expand health savings accounts and create association health plans so small businesses can cover their workers, so more families are able to get health insurance plans they manage and they call their own. We'll help families in need by expanding community health centers. We'll make sure every eligible child is enrolled in our Government's low-income health insurance program.

To make sure health care is available and affordable for the American citizens, we're going to do something about the junk lawsuits that run up the cost of medicine and run good doctors out of practice.

Doctor Linda Barrasse is with us today, a cardiologist. She's got a group practice in Scranton. She's just like the docs I met yesterday in Chester County, Pennsylvania. Doctors are concerned about the quality of health care in Pennsylvania because of all these junk lawsuits. They're running good docs out of practice. There are too many obgyns being run out of practice and too many Pennsylvania women having to drive for miles to get the care they need and deserve. Linda talks about the—needing to close offices. They're having trouble recruiting new doctors. Medical liability is an issue in the Pennsylvania. It is an issue across this country. It is a national problem that requires a national solution. I am for medical liability reform.

Senator Kerry has a different point of view on our schools and our health care system. Now, he voted for the No Child Left Behind Act, but now wants to weaken the accountability standards. He's proposed including measures like teacher attendance in the accountability measures to judge whether students can read and write and add and subtract. He voted against health savings accounts. He opposed association health care plans that would help our small businesses. He has voted 10 times against medical liability reform on the floor of the United States Senate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. The other day, he said, well, he's for some kind of plan.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He put a trial lawyer on the ticket.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He can run, but he cannot hide.

He's proposed a big Government health care plan that would cause 8 million families to lose the private coverage they get at work and have to go on a Government plan. Eighty percent of the people who get coverage under his proposal would be enrolled on a Government program. You might remember one of our debates. He tried to tell the Americans when it comes to his health care plan, and I quote, "The Government has nothing to do with it." I could barely contain myself when I heard that. My opponent's plan would move America down the road to Federal control of health care, and that is the wrong road to take for American families.

In all we do to reform health care, we will make sure the decisions are made by doctors and patients, not by officials in Washington, DC.

Fourth clear choice in this election involves your retirement. Our Nation made a solid commitment to America's seniors on Social Security and on Medicare. When I ran for President 4 years ago, I promised to keep that commitment and improve Medicare by adding prescription drugs. I kept my word. Leaders in both political parties have talked about strengthening Medicare for years. We got the job done. Seniors are now getting discounts on medicine with drug discount cards. Low-income seniors are getting $600 to help them with their prescription drugs this year, another $600 next year. And beginning in 2006, all seniors will be able to get prescription drug coverage under Medicare.

My opponent voted against the Medicare bill that included prescription drugs, even though it was supported by AARP and other seniors groups. During this campaign, he said, quote, "If I'm President, we're going to repeal that phony bill," end quote. Then, of course, later on, he said, "No, I don't want to repeal it." Sounds familiar. [*Laughter*] As your President for the next 4 years, I will defend the reforms we have worked so hard to pass, and we will keep the promise of Medicare for America's seniors.

We will keep the promise of Social Security for our seniors and strengthen Social Security for generations to come. Every election, politicians try to scare seniors about Social Security. It's predictable. In the 2000 campaign, they ran ads saying that, "If George W. gets elected, our seniors will not get their checks." You might remember those ads. As you round up the vote, would you please remind our seniors, George W. got elected, and our seniors got their checks. And when I get elected this time, the seniors will still get their checks.

But I know today's moms and dads and grandparents are concerned about their children and grandchildren when it comes to Social Security. Someday, our youngest workers, of course, will retire, and we need to make sure Social Security will be there when they need it as well. I believe younger workers ought to take some of their own money and put it in a personal savings account, a personal savings account that will earn a greater rate of return than a Social Security trust, a personal savings account they can call their own, an account the Government cannot take away.

My opponent takes a different approach. He talks about protecting Social Security, but I want everybody to remember, he is the only candidate who has voted eight times for higher taxes on Social Security benefits.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. When it comes to the next generation, he has offered nothing to strengthen Social Security. American families have a clear choice in this election. My opponent wants to scare the seniors of today and do nothing to secure the system for seniors of tomorrow. I'll keep the promise of Social Security and Medicare and strengthen these great systems for our children and our grandchildren.

The fifth clear choice in this election is on the values that are so crucial to keeping America's families strong. Here, my opponent and I are miles apart.

I believe marriage is a sacred commitment, one of the most fundamental, most enduring, and most important institutions of our civilization. My opponent says he supports marriage, but his record shows he will not defend it. This isn't a partisan issue. The vast majority of Democrats, for example, supported the Defense of Marriage Act, which defined marriage as the union of a man and a woman—a bill which President Clinton

signed into law. But Senator Kerry was a part of the far left bank, far left minority, that voted against that piece of legislation. I will always stand firm to protect the sanctity of marriage.

I believe it is important to work with people to find common ground on difficult issues. Republicans and Democrats, many citizens on both sides of the life issue, agreed we should ban the brutal practice of partial-birth abortion. But Senator Kerry was part of a far left minority that voted against the ban.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He also voted against parental notification laws and voted against the Unborn Victims of Violence Act. I will continue to——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I will continue to reach out to Americans of every belief and move this goodhearted Nation toward a culture of life.

My opponent has said that you can find the heart and soul of America in Hollywood. [*Laughter*] Most of us don't look to Hollywood as the source of values. The heart and soul of America is found right here in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

All these choices make this one of the most important elections in our history. The security and prosperity of our country, the health and education of our citizens, the retirement of our seniors, and the direction of our culture are all at stake. The decision is in the best hands because the decision belongs to the American people.

I believe in the future of this country. We see a great day for the American people. One of my favorite quotes was written by a Texan, a friend of ours. He said, "Sarah and I live on the east side of the mountain. It's the sunrise side, not the sunset side. It is the side that sees the day that is coming, not to see the day that is gone." My opponent has spent a lot of this campaign talking about the day that is gone. I see the day that's coming.

We've been through a lot together. We've been through a lot together in the last years. Because we've done the hard work of climbing that mountain, we see the valley below. We'll protect our families. We'll build on their prosperity. We'll defend our deepest values. We will spread freedom and peace, and as we do, America will be safer here at home.

Four years ago, when I traveled your great State asking for the vote, I made a pledge that if you honored me with this office, I would uphold the honor and the dignity. With your help, I will do so for 4 more years.

Thanks for coming. On to victory! Thank you all. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 a.m. at the Wachovia Arena at Casey Plaza. In his remarks, he referred to Charles Duelfer, Special Advisor to the Director of Central Intelligence; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab al Zarqawi; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan. He also referred to the "Comprehensive Report of the Special Advisor to the DCI on Iraq's WMD," issued September 30.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

October 16

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to Sunrise, FL.

Later in the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to West Palm Beach, FL, arriving in the afternoon. Later, they traveled to Daytona Beach, FL.

Later in the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

October 18

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Marlton, NJ, arriving in the afternoon.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to Boca Raton, FL, where, in the evening, he attended a Victory 2004 dinner

at a private residence.

Later in the evening, the President traveled to St. Pete Beach, FL.

The President declared a major disaster in Virginia and ordered Federal aid to supplement Commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding from the remnants of Hurricane Jeanne beginning on September 27 and continuing.

October 19

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. He then traveled to St. Petersburg, FL. Later, he traveled to New Port Richey, FL.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to The Villages, FL. Later, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

October 20

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Mason City, IA, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Matthew Meyer.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Rochester, MN, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Sister Chabanel Hayunga.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Eau Claire, WI, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Mick Jay Krueger.

Later in the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

October 21

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Then, in the Roosevelt Room, he participated in the signing ceremony for S. 2634, the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act. Later, he participated in interviews with the Hispanic television networks Univision and Telemundo for later broadcast.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Downingtown, PA, where, upon arrival in the afternoon, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Charlotte Huber. Later, at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, he met with Justin Cardinal Rigali, Archbishop of Philadelphia, PA.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to Hershey, PA. Later, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

October 22

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Wilkes-Barre, PA, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Dolly Yunkunis.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Canton, OH, where, upon arrival in the afternoon, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Dan Yeric. Later, he participated in a discussion on medical liability reform and health care at the Canton Palace Theatre.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to St. Petersburg, FL, where, in the evening, he attended a Victory 2004 dinner at a private residence. Later, he traveled to St. Pete Beach.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released October 16

Statement by the Deputy Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 2292

Released October 17

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 982, H.R. 2408, H.R. 2771, H.R. 4115, H.R. 4259, and H.R. 5105

Released October 18

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary on action to support the deployment of the expanded African Union mission in Sudan

Statement by the Press Secretary congratulating King Norodom Sihamoni on assuming Cambodia's throne

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Virginia

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 4011, H.R. 4567, H.R. 4850, S. 551, S. 1421, S. 1537, S. 1663, S. 1687, S. 1814, S. 2052, S. 2180, S. 2319, S. 2363, and S. 2508

Fact sheet: Providing the Resources Necessary To Protect America

Released October 20

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 854 and S. 2895

Released October 21

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary: Humanitarian Assistance for the People of Darfur

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Signs the North Korean Human Rights Act

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 5122, S. 33, S. 1791, S. 2178, S. 2415, S. 2511, S. 2634, S. 2742

Released October 22

Transcript of press gaggles by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 4520

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 2195

Acts Approved by the President

Approved October 16

H.R. 982 / Public Law 108–326
To clarify the tax treatment of bonds and other obligations issued by the Government of American Samoa

H.R. 2408 / Public Law 108–327
National Wildlife Refuge Volunteer Act of 2004

H.R. 2771 / Public Law 108–328
To amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to reauthorize the New York City Watershed Protection Program

H.R. 4115 / Public Law 108–329
To amend the Act of November 2, 1966 (80 Stat. 1112), to allow binding arbitration clauses to be included in all contracts affecting the land within the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Reservation

H.R. 4259 / Public Law 108–330
Department of Homeland Security Financial Accountability Act

H.R. 5105 / Public Law 108–331
To authorize the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution to carry out construction and related activities in support of the collaborative Very Energetic Radiation Imaging Telescope Array System (VERITAS) project on Kitt Peak near Tucson, Arizona

S. 2292 / Public Law 108–332
Global Anti-Semitism Review Act of 2004

Approved October 18

H.R. 4011 / Public Law 108–333
North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004

H.R. 4567 / Public Law 108–334
Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2005

H.R. 4850 / Public Law 108–335
District of Columbia Appropriations Act, 2005

S. 551 / Public Law 108–336
Southern Ute and Colorado Intergovernmental Agreement Implementation Act of 2004

S. 1421 / Public Law 108–337
Alaska Native Allotment Subdivision Act

S. 1537 / Public Law 108–338
To direct the Secretary of Agriculture to convey to the New Hope Cemetery Association certain land in the State of Arkansas for use as a cemetery

S. 1663 / Public Law 108–339
To replace certain Coastal Barrier Resources System maps

S. 1687 / Public Law 108–340
Manhattan Project National Historical Park Study Act

S. 1814 / Public Law 108–341
To transfer Federal lands between the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior

S. 2052 / Public Law 108–342
El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Act

S. 2319 / Public Law 108–343
Tapoco Project Licensing Act of 2004

S. 2363 / Public Law 108–344
To revise and extend the Boys and Girls Clubs of America

S. 2508 / Public Law 108–345
To redesignate the Ridges Basin Reservoir, Colorado, as Lake Nighthorse

S. 2180 / Public Law 108–346
Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests Land Exchange Act of 2004

Approved October 20

H.R. 854 / Public Law 108–347
Belarus Democracy Act of 2004

S. 2895 / Public Law 108–348
To authorize the Gateway Arch in St. Louis, Missouri, to be illuminated by pink lights in honor of breast cancer awareness month

Approved October 21

H.R. 5122 / Public Law 108–349
To amend the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 to permit members of the Board of Directors of the Office of Compliance to serve for 2 terms

S. 33 / Public Law 108–350
To authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to sell or exchange all or part of certain administrative sites and other land in the Ozark-St. Francis and Ouachita National Forests and to use funds derived from the sale or exchange to acquire, construct, or improve administrative sites

S. 1791 / Public Law 108–351
To amend the Lease Lot Conveyance Act of 2002 to provide that the amounts received by the United States under that Act shall be deposited in the reclamation fund, and for other purposes

S. 2178 / Public Law 108–352
National Park System Laws Technical Amendments Act of 2004

S. 2415 / Public Law 108–353
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4141 Postmark Drive, Anchorage, Alaska, as the "Robert J. Opinsky Post Office Building"

S. 2511 / Public Law 108–354
Chimayo Water Supply System and Espanola Filtration Facility Act of 2004

S. 2634 / Public Law 108–355
Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act

S. 2742 / Public Law 108–356
To extend certain authority of the Supreme Court Police, modify the venue of prosecutions relating to the Supreme Court building and grounds, and authorize the acceptance of gifts to the United States Supreme Court

Executive Orders

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